



WINDSOR TOWN PLAN

Windsor, Vermont

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1. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

A portion of a letter printed in London in 1797, by John Andrew Graham best describes Windsor in a manner that still holds true today:

Windsor is built immediately on the bank of the river, and is the capital of the county to which it gives its name. The site rises sufficiently to secure houses from any apprehension of being inundated: and a more picturesque, or more commodious or situations for building upon can scarcely be conceived than those formed by the curvatures of the waters along this delightful shore. The houses are of wood, some of them erected with great taste and judgment.... Added to the beauty of its situation Nature has profusely bestowed vast local advantages on this charming spot. Lying on one of the first rivers of the world, and contiguous to, and maintaining a constant and unavoidable intercourse with New Hampshire, and the immense country to the North; these circumstances, and industry and enterprising spirit of its inhabitants, the great probability of its increasing population from the accession of fresh numbers drawn thither from other countries (and now states) by the real and solid attractions it holds forth; its rising manufactures; in short, everything unites to increase its consequence and render WINDSOR sooner or later, a grand emporium of commerce and wealth.¹

The bridge built in 1796 is described as follows:

This bridge is universally allowed to be the best and most perfect in AMERICA, and is the first of its kind thrown across the Connecticut River. Later the bridge was even built to be more grand in 1866 as a 'covered bridge.'

The Ascutney Mill Dam was erected in 1834 by the Ascutney Mill Dam company and is the first masonry, gravity-arch dam built in the United States. The purpose of the dam was to increase the utility and potential of the Mill Brook's waterpower to sites located along the brook by providing a storage reservoir which would regulate the flow of water in the brook and thereby eliminate seasonal irregularities. The Ascutney Mill Dam Company's principal interest in building the dam was to accelerate the industrial growth of the village of Windsor by guaranteeing continuous waterpower. The dam was designated a National Historic Civic Engineering Landmark in 1970.

In this historical background, the assets of the community today are revealed. The beautiful wooden and brick structures, the enterprising spirit, the vast beauty of the location, and the welcome arrival of new manufacturing and business trades still echo the history of the town.

Although Windsor may no longer be considered a "grand emporium of commerce and wealth," the community is working to rebuild its economy, while preserving the natural and historical assets that were present in the town's early years. This plan will reflect a

town on the rebound, with its sleeves rolled up in an effort to maintain all that is truly good about small-town living.

The Birthplace of Vermont

Windsor's original 23,600 acres were chartered by New Hampshire to Samuel Asgley, Jacob Cummings and 57 others on July 6, 1761. The town was named "Windsor" for John Stuart, the Earl of Windsor. At the time, New Hampshire did not have the right to grant these lands but the Province of New York did. However, the lack of clear title did not prevent settlers from building homes, roads and mills. The people immediately sought to be granted a new charter from The Province of New York. Clear titles were secured eleven years later, in 1772.

Windsor is the birthplace of Vermont. The first meetings of the town were held as Province of New York in 1769 but operated under the New Hampshire Charter until 1777. The name Vermont was proposed and approved on June 4, 1777; however, the proposed constitution received no action on this date. Another meeting was set for July 2, 1777. The study of the proposed constitution lasted for four days. On the fourth day, July 8, 1777, the delegates retreated from the meeting hall to Elijah's tavern. As the meeting was adjourned, word came that Ticonderoga once again had been seized by the British. A severe thunderstorm followed this news, making it difficult for the delegates to leave. It was then and there that the Vermont Constitution was adopted. A Council of Safety was formed to run the State until government became formally organized. Delegates left to join their militia units and prepared to defend their homes.

In March of 1778 the first meeting of the Vermont Legislature was held at the Windsor Town and Meeting House. In 1781, Windsor was named a town in the State. In 1791, after the Revolutionary War, Congress admitted "Vermont" as the fourteenth state in the Union.

Windsor Today

Downtown

Historic buildings line the streets in Windsor. The original site of the town center is where the legion hall stands today. It is characterized by the village green on the north side of State Street. A granite marker, south of the Congregational Church, was the spot of the first meetinghouse until 1798. A rigorous effort is underway to catalog many of these buildings in an effort to receive the designation as a "Historic Village."

Below the Mill Pond Dam are several historic industrial sites. The best preserved industrial building is the American Precision Museum. It is hoped that someday there will be a walking trail that links these unique industrial and archaeological sites of historical industrial significance in the vicinity of Mill Pond Dam.

Downtown Windsor is easily accessible by foot from three distinct neighborhoods: Lowell Street, Bridge and River Street, and State and Main Street. Banking, restaurants, retail shops, schools, professional services and the Mount Ascutney Hospital are located within a

half mile of downtown. Connecticut River Transit circulates through town on a fixed schedule, providing access to shopping and medical services for visitors and residents.

Route 5 Corridor

Windsor's greatest successes will be measured by its ability to promote itself as a historical town – a town that encourages business, continues to support education and plans to protect the attractive visual corridors that are the approaches to this historically significant village. Route 5 and the Connecticut River run through the heart of downtown. There are two interstate approaches, from the north and south, to Windsor along this route. Sewer and water access are readily available to the north. Current zoning allows for roadside business and some limited industrial sites along this northern corridor. If not carefully planned, this area could become a strip development project. It is in the best interest of the town to promote development in existing structures, and to allow for controlled and planned development in new structures that preserves the scenic quality of this river valley corridor.

Fortunately, the Windsor Industrial Park is able to utilize existing topography and natural features that preserve scenic views of the Connecticut River from the interstate and Route 5. The remainder of the corridor may be maintained by innovative parking design, building design and location, lighting and screening measures. South of town, rural views and lands are protected from development by private and land trust ownership. There is a possibility that a second industrial park could be located on the town boundary of Weathersfield and Windsor. There are infrastructure expansions and improvements that would have to be addressed, as well as the concerns of the abutting community of Weathersfield.

Route 44 Corridor

Route 44 is the western approach to Windsor. This is an area positioned to take advantage of tourist traffic generated by the nearby Ascutney Mountain Resort, Ascutney State Park, and the towns of West Windsor, Reading and South Woodstock. Most of the land along this road is developed as small residential lots, and has topography or natural features that limit commercial development options. The area is served by a sewer line which would need to be upgraded to accommodate any commercial development. Although limited commercial development may be appropriate for portions of Route 44, limitations of the sewer service and water supply lines may make such development inappropriate at this time. A few sites could be developed commercially if they have a good on-site water supply. The Route 44 corridor should be examined closely to determine its growth potential.

Agricultural, Recreation, and Conservation Lands

The face of farming has changed in Windsor as it has throughout New England. Four major farm enterprises remain in the town: the Geer farm to the north, the MacLennan and Redick farms to the south, and the Yates farm west of town on the flanks of Mt. Ascutney. According to recent surveys, the residents of Windsor do not see its future in promoting this industry in the town. However, residents do benefit from the lands that have been conserved or protected by individuals and trusts. Ownership and management of farm enterprises have changed. Many farms are now operated as second businesses and are

operated by local farm managers. Some small-scale family farms still exist west of town, but most of the “farmable lands” and road frontage have been developed to accommodate small- and medium-size residential lots. Farms throughout the state are taking advantage of the Vermont tourism market; this is an opportunity that farms in Windsor may choose to explore.

Within walking distance of the village is a major wildlife and recreation area called Paradise Park. The Park recently doubled in size due to a purchase of 103 acres of the Evarts estate. Open to everyone, the Park provides a connecting trail network of level terrain, making it one of the only parks of its kind in such close proximity to a downtown area. Other areas of land that have been set aside for conservation include portions of the Reddick and Gilnocky farms to the south, the Crocker Sanctuary west of town, and a canoe landing on the Connecticut River.

Recreational opportunities such as boating, fishing, and skiing are readily available and many more activities are provided by the Windsor Recreation Department. Cultural activities are featured by the local library, the Lois E. White performing arts facility at the high school, and the Vermont State Craft Center.

Economic Development Trends

The Town of Windsor is surrounded by the neighboring communities of Weathersfield, West Windsor, Hartland, and Cornish across the river in New Hampshire. Windsor is one of the smallest towns in terms of land area – the area of the town is 12,544 acres, approximately 3,000 of which are owned by the state of Vermont. The town is situated 20 minutes south of Lebanon, N.H., the largest employment center in the area; 20 minutes north of Springfield; and 15 minutes west of Claremont, N.H.

Tourism may be one of the keys to Windsor’s economic success. And Windsor, like many smaller Vermont towns, would like to attract a share of the tourist dollar. Although not adopted as the formal slogan for the community, “See Windsor Work” encompasses the reality of the past and the vision of the future. The town has an active business community and a newly formed chamber of commerce that are working to revitalize the downtown area to attract businesses, tourists, and inhabitants of surrounding communities.

Current efforts are being focused on creating a more tourist friendly village. Many residents of Windsor work in surrounding employment centers. The town needs to focus on what it can provide residents and nearby communities in order to develop a stable downtown economy.

Businesses have vacated downtown locations for a variety of reasons. People prefer the easy access parking that is provided in shopping centers and malls as opposed to curbside parking. Currently there is not enough foot traffic downtown to encourage browser shopping. Also, there is not a key retail or commercial enterprise located downtown that would encourage other satellite businesses to locate there. A cohesive and successful

marketing and recruitment strategy must be developed and actively pursued in order to get the word out that Windsor is in business and does have amenities to offer.

The lure of small-town living is attractive to many looking to relocate either business or family. Community choices are made based on access to high quality education, recreational activities, safe communities (low petty crime rates), visual attractiveness and employment centers that offer a living wage.

Industrial Areas

Formerly the hub of several large manufacturing industries, Windsor's industrial areas currently host several incubators, small businesses, and manufacturing facilities. The Windsor Industrial Park is the location of two major production facilities. The Industrial Park hosts Simon Pearce, a pottery and glass blowing plant, and the Harpoon Brewery. Both of these businesses have included tourism as part of their overall business plan. Other industrial park businesses include Lebanon Screw and Land Air Express.

One of the largest industrial areas in town is located in the center of town and along the Connecticut River. It is predominantly occupied by the Park Corporation (the former Cone Blanchard complex) and the former Goodyear plant, now owned and operated by the Connecticut River Development Corporation (CRDC) that hosts several light manufacturing businesses. The area has the advantage of good rail and electrical service access. Development in this area is hampered by constricted vehicle access, location in a flood plain, the age and condition of the existing buildings, and adjacency to residential areas.

Due to shifts in vision of the future, impacts created by heavy industry and manufacturing operations are not as tolerated today by residents as part of village living. Light manufacturing or business parks that do not detract from the quality of life for residents or visitors downtown and that create limited environmental degradation, are considered more appropriate for areas in close proximity to the village.

ABOUT THE TOWN PLAN

The Windsor Town Plan is intended to be an active Municipal Development Plan as authorized by 24 V.S.A. section 4381, which states, *"Any Municipality may undertake a comprehensive planning program including related preliminary planning and engineering studies, and prepare, maintain and implement a plan within its jurisdiction in accordance with this chapter."* This Plan is intended to include all ten elements required by section 4382.

The Windsor Town Plan is to be actively used by the Town to guide future growth and development in Windsor. Although the Plan is adopted for five years at a time, it can and

should be modified and readopted as often as necessary to meet the changing needs of the town. The Plan must not be allowed to become outdated. An up-to-date, well-constructed town plan can be a useful guide to growth as well as an indispensable shield from unwanted development.

The Plan was written through the efforts of the Windsor Planning Commission and the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, with input from the townspeople primarily through a Town Plan Survey conducted in 1996.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation of the Windsor Town Plan will be carried out primarily by the Town's legislative body (Selectboard), Department Heads, and the Planning Commission. The Town will work to achieve the goals described in this Plan by coordinating its efforts on a number of fronts. These will include following the recommendations which are developed in each section of the Plan; revising land use regulations (zoning and subdivision regulations, and official map) where appropriate; implementing sewer and water allocation policies; tax policy; capital expenditures on municipal services; involvement in regional issues, including regional planning, solid waste, transportation and economic development; and participation in Act 250 proceedings.

The Plan will be implemented in less direct ways, as well. It is hoped that landowners and private developers will use the document when designing development projects. The Plan can be used to express local concerns to state agencies when they create planning and resource management policies and programs. It can also be used to demonstrate local foresight and commitment when applying for state and federal funding for planning, development, and infrastructure improvement projects.

The Planning Commission must carefully monitor changing conditions in the Town and amend the Plan and Zoning Regulations in accordance with the changing needs of the community.

WINDSOR'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE REGION

Windsor borders New Hampshire, via the Connecticut River, at the Towns of Cornish and Plainfield. Windsor's Vermont neighbors are Weathersfield, West Windsor, and Hartland. Of this cluster of towns, only Windsor has: a regional hospital; a downtown area equipped with a modern infrastructure; a modern industrial park; full time police, fire, and ambulance services; and its own high school. In addition, Windsor's downtown offers a concentration of retail opportunities to shoppers, including two supermarkets, not available in neighboring towns. Windsor's neighbors have shown no particular interest in competing with Windsor's services. If anything, surrounding towns seem to prefer to remain somewhat more rural and less developed. It is reasonable to expect that further improvements in services offered by Windsor would be appreciated and used by our

neighbors. At the same time, the geographic location of Windsor's downtown is such that, with the exception of Route 5, most of Windsor's borders with its neighbors are rural and wooded. The side of Windsor which faces Cornish, NH could be improved aesthetically. Elements of this Plan point out this need, and recommend steps which should lead to eventual improvements.

This Windsor Town Plan offers goals and recommendations which should lead to a better future for Windsor as well as its neighbors. The planning goals of surrounding towns, and a recognition that Windsor provides many services for the region as a whole, should be considered when implementing and updating this Plan. The time for Windsor to be a major source of influence beyond its immediate neighbors has come, gone, and will come again when economic forces so dictate. Until such time, Windsor will pride itself on being a good neighbor and a good place to live.

2. MUNICIPAL SERVICES, UTILITIES AND FACILITIES

Municipal services include those provided by the Town Administrative Offices, Central Dispatch Center, Fire Department (including Emergency Medical Services), Highway Department, Municipal Recycling Center, Police Department, Recreation Department, Utility Department, and Windsor Public Library, as well as all publicly owned land, facilities, highways, roads, streets, rights of way, structures, trails and paths, and equipment that serve the functions of such services for the benefit of the community. Many of these facilities and services are presently sufficient to meet Town needs. Several utilities, such as the Town of Windsor water supply and the new Municipal Sewage Treatment Plant, exemplify standards of performance adequate for future growth.

Several community facilities and services have been upgraded. Nevertheless, a need exists to repair or replace components of the Town's infrastructure and Town facilities. Addressing such concerns is one of the main functions of this document, by proposing goals and recommendations pertaining to each of Windsor's municipal services.

It is obviously of primary importance to provide adequate community facilities and services for people who live or work in, or who visit, the Town of Windsor. The Town should pursue outside sources of funding and assistance to encourage projects in the Town's interest. The following broadly stated goals identify effective uses of our community resources. They are organized by municipal function, then listed in suggested order of priority.

In addition to the specific recommendations listed under each department in the pages that follow, it is recommended that all municipal departments develop and distribute a comprehensive needs assessment for capital budgeting purposes, and strive to achieve the maximum average length of retention of municipal employees.

Public Lands (Municipal, State and Federal)

Background

There is a substantial amount of publicly owned land in Windsor, the biggest portion of which is made up of Ascutney State Park. Other significant pieces include Paradise Park and Lake Runnemede, the Fairgrounds and National Guard armory, school grounds, and the state correctional facility. Additional background information on Public Lands is included in the Land Use section of this Plan. Maps showing public lands are at the end of the document.

Goals

- 1) Preserve the integrity of public lands that are important to the community through the use of appropriate land use regulations, conservation easements and land purchases.
- 2) Maintain Town recreation areas at a level that is safe, accessible, economical and comfortable to users.
- 3) Assess the potential for increased recreational use of public lands.

- 4) Obtain limited access for recreational activities along the Connecticut River.
- 5) Seek the return of private ownership of excess Correctional Facility land.

Recommendations

- 1) On an annual basis, all town organizations involved with municipal lands should meet to discuss and coordinate their activities.
- 2) Support the Paradise Park Commission with land use related activities.
- 3) Create a subcommittee to investigate the feasibility of attaining access to the Connecticut River.
- 4) Expand the use of public lands for recreation purposes.
- 5) Support negotiations and/or legislation for the conversion of State lands to private ownership.

Town Buildings

Background

The Town of Windsor owns, or is partially responsible for, many buildings including: the Municipal Building, Windsor House, the Windsor Library (not Town-owned, but Town supported), State Street School, the Junior/Senior High School, the Town Highway Garage and its accessory structures, the sewage treatment plants and pumping stations, water department structures, the bath house at Mill Pond, and various accessory structures at the Fairgrounds and parks.

Goals

- 1) Maintain municipal facilities for municipal functions in a pleasant and functional condition.
- 2) Maintain Town structures in accordance with sound standards and practices.
- 3) Establish a Capital Improvement Plan.

Recommendations

- 1) Develop and implement management plans for all publicly owned facilities. These plans should include inventory of plant, physical needs, and maintenance requirements.
- 2) Develop a plan for and rehabilitate the Fairgrounds recreational facilities.
- 3) Improve bathhouse at Mill Pond.

Public Safety

Central Dispatch Center

Background

The Central Dispatch Center is operated by a staff of full-time and part-time Dispatchers. The Dispatch Center is responsible for the dispatching of the Windsor Police, Fire, Ambulance, Water & Sewer, and Highway Departments; the Ascutney Fire Department; Cornish Fire Department and Rescue Squad; Reading Fast Squad; West Weathersfield Fire Department; and the West Windsor Constable, Fast Squad and Fire Department. The dispatch center is also in direct communication with Windsor and Hartland School Buses and Hartland and West Windsor highway Departments. Beginning in 1998, the Dispatch Center will be integrated with and accessible through the Vermont Enhanced 911 system.

Goal

- 1) Continue to coordinate communication between the Center and the municipal agencies that the Center currently serves.

Recommendations

- 1) Continually upgrade equipment as required by the Center to facilitate operations.
- 2) Expand the Dispatching Center's scope of coverage by allowing communities within reasonable communication distance to purchase services on the basis of budgeted per capita costs multiplied by a rate set by the Selectboard for covered non-resident populations.

Emergency Medical Services

Background

This service, organized in July 1970, is operated by the Windsor Fire Department. Emergency Medical Services personnel now include Emergency Medical Technicians and Emergency Care Attendants.

Goals

- 1) Provide comprehensive emergency medical services to the communities served.
- 2) Recruit and train call personnel from within each community served.
- 3) Continue to provide advanced life support services for all residents of the greater Windsor community.

Recommendations

- 1) Explore the advantages and disadvantages of regionalization of both Fire and EMS operations.
- 2) Encourage the advancement of all personnel to the level of EMT or higher.
- 3) Maintain all apparatus and equipment for maximum useful life.
- 4) Establish service fees and contract charges at a level sufficient to operate the service.

Windsor Fire Department

Background

The Windsor Fire Department provides the town with around-the-clock fire protection using a combination of paid and call fire fighters. Fire prevention education is an important part of the department's mission. The department provides needed instruction to schools,

hospitals, nursing homes, municipal employees, and individual property owners. Presently, the Fire Department is operated by a staff of four full-time fire officers assisted by volunteer firefighters.

The Windsor Fire Department is a member of the Connecticut Valley Fire Mutual Aid System and the Upper Valley Fire Mutual Aid System. This means that in addition to the equipment and personnel at the local fire station, the town has access to literally dozens of other fire departments that can respond within minutes to a large-scale emergency in Windsor.

Goals

- 1) Provide effective fire protection services to the community.
- 2) Provide consistent, ample amounts of water at sufficient volume and pressure for adequate fire protection.
- 3) Increase departmental effectiveness in recruiting and retaining call firefighters.
- 4) Maintain an Emergency Management Plan.
- 5) Maintain Hazardous Materials certification.

Recommendations

- 1) Encourage development of rural water supply reservoirs to meet Insurance Services Officers' requirements.
- 2) Encourage the installation of sprinkler systems in all new and renovated buildings.
- 3) Develop a comprehensive Fire Prevention and Public Education Program which includes fire inspections by local department officials, an education program in schools, and public education presentations for local groups and clubs.
- 4) Continue use of the mutual aid system in an effort to manage the cost of fire suppression.
- 5) Explore the advantages and disadvantages of regionalization of both Fire and EMS operations.

Windsor Police Department

Background

The Windsor Police Department maintains a staff of full-time and part-time officers. The Windsor County Sheriff and Vermont State Police also provide law enforcement services to Windsor.

Goals

- 1) Provide comprehensive protection services to residents, visitors, and businesses.
- 2) Continued departmental involvement in the school systems and community by emphasizing the informative/educational and prevention role of the Police Department.

Recommendations

- 1) Continue cooperation with State and area law enforcement agencies.
- 2) Initiate a Neighborhood Watch Program for interested neighborhoods.
- 3) Invite Public Safety personnel within commuting distance to training sessions conducted for Windsor personnel, with registration fees set to provide a reasonable profit and risk allowance.
- 4) Continue the development of the relationship between the Police Department and local youth.

Public Utilities - Water and Sewer

Background

The maintenance and operation of Windsor's water and sewer systems are critical to achieving orderly and cost-effective growth and land development. Currently, much of the infrastructure is in serious need of replacement. Development that depends on municipal water and sewer service should occur in areas that are already served by the municipal systems, or where the Town is prepared to extend them. Extensions and upgrades to the water and sewer systems should be planned in order to encourage the highest-density development in areas identified in the Land Use section of this Plan as being most appropriate and most capable of supporting it. Provision of these services should be planned in accordance with and in anticipation of development, rather than in reaction to it.

Water Department

The Windsor water system serves an area bounded by the Industrial Park to the north, the Connecticut River to the east, the Armory and Mt. Ascutney Hospital to the west, and Biebel Builders to the south. The water source is a series of drilled wells off Pumping Station Road, adjacent to Lake Runnemedede. It appears that this source, with a capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day, will be adequate to meet present and future water demands. Water storage facilities are located at the west end of the Village off State Street, and to the north off Route 5. Windsor water customers currently use about 254,049,000 gallons of water per year, which is approximately 696,000 gallons of water per day. A map showing the water delivery system is located in the back of the Plan.

Goals

- 1) Provide potable water service to all users of the municipal water supply.
- 2) Provide consistent, ample amounts of water at sufficient volume and pressure for adequate fire protection.
- 3) Provide municipal water service in ways that encourage growth in desirable areas, result in lower construction and maintenance costs for taxpayers, and protect known water sources and other natural resources.
- 4) Actively pursue replacement and major repairs of the water department infrastructure.

Recommendations

- 1) Enact a prioritized maintenance and replacement program for water pipes and other components of the physical plant in accordance with the existing plan adopted by the Selectboard. Correlate such projects with needed repairs to streets, bridges, and sidewalks.
- 2) Continue to map all water lines in the Town.
- 3) Protect the town water supply against environmental hazards and terrorist threats.

Sewer Department

Windsor's primary sewer system serves an area bounded by the Industrial Park to the north, the Connecticut River to the east, the Windsor Correctional Facility to the west, and the Sewage Treatment Plant to the south. Sewage also flows to the Main Treatment Plant from the WASTE sewer line, which is privately owned and operated and runs from the armory to the Ascutney Mountain Resort in West Windsor. The Weston Heights Treatment Plant serves a small area surrounding Weston Heights. The Town's system consists of the Main Treatment Plant, the Weston Heights Treatment Plant, and several pump stations. During the 97/98 fiscal year, a total of 171,500,000 gallons of raw wastewater was processed by the system. The Main Treatment Plant has a capacity of 1.13 million gallons per day, and the Weston Heights Plant has already reached its capacity of 15,000 gallons per day. A map of the sewer collection system is in the back of the Plan.

Goals

- 1) Provide sanitary sewer service for all sewer users.
- 2) Maintain an acceptable quality of effluent discharges.
- 3) Provide municipal sewer service in ways that encourage growth in desirable areas, result in the lowest construction and maintenance costs for taxpayers, and protect known water sources and other natural resources.
- 4) Retain well-trained employees.

Recommendations

- 1) Maintain an updated and prioritized program of restoration, repair, or replacement of physical plant components in accordance with the existing plan adopted by the Selectboard. When practical, correlate renovation projects with needed repairs to streets, bridges, and sidewalks.
- 2) Continue to map all sewer lines in the Town.
- 3) Develop a sewer allocation program for the community (i.e. residential, industrial, commercial, etc.).
- 4) Identify the future expansion of sewer service for concentrated development or where a negative environmental impact may exist.
- 5) Upgrade sewer lines where grades and pipelines are not up to standard.

- 6) Extend the collection system in built-up areas.

Municipal Recycling Center

Background

A recycling program in Windsor has been operated for several years, having been inaugurated by local Eagle Scout members of the Green Mountain Council, Boy Scouts of America. At the March 1990 Windsor Town Meeting, students of Windsor High School proposed that a Municipal Recycling Center be established to be funded by the Town of Windsor and the State of Vermont. The proposal was approved, a Recycling Committee was appointed by the Town Selectboard, and the new facility opened in January 1991.

Goals

- 1) Increase the use of the Municipal Recycling Center in the schools and throughout the community.
- 2) Expand the range of materials that can be recycled at the Center.
- 3) Examine the feasibility of community-wide curbside recycling.

Recommendations

- 1) Develop publicity and education programs to inform potential users about the Center.
- 2) Design informational materials to demonstrate the long-term financial and environmental benefits to the community by reducing its waste stream.

Solid Waste Disposal

Background

The Town of Windsor has a contractual agreement with the New Hampshire/Vermont Solid Waste Project, which provides for disposal of Windsor's solid waste at the Wheelabrator Claremont waste-to-energy facility in Claremont, New Hampshire. Solid waste is delivered to the plant by commercial haulers. Recycling is not mandatory in Windsor, but residents are provided the opportunity to dispose of many recyclables responsibly at the Municipal Recycling Center (see previous section).

Goals

- 1) Dispose of solid waste in a legal and environmentally responsible manner with emphasis on recycling and on private sector involvement.
- 2) Consider a composting program for food wastes and other compostable materials.
- 3) Promote the land application of sludge in areas where there will be minimal risk to the community.
- 4) Reduce/eliminate litter in public areas.

Recommendations

- 1) Participate in and work towards the expansion of recycling programs.
- 2) Increase enforcement of anti-litter and trash ordinance.
- 3) Initiate a community-wide education and awareness campaign to reduce litter and trash.

Recreational Facilities

Background

Windsor is fortunate to have a considerable variety of recreational facilities, particularly for a town of Windsor's size. Camping, swimming, hunting, fishing, tennis, ice skating and ice hockey, hiking, picnicking, observing wildlife, baseball, softball and basketball, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling are all available to Windsor residents and visitors. The Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge, Windsor Public Library, Vermont State Craft Center, American Precision Museum, Old Constitution House, State Street School Playground, Summer Recreation Program and Concerts on the Common, Constitution Common, and the countless attractions of Paradise Park comprise some of Windsor's many recreational resources. Many important recreational opportunities in Windsor are provided by the recreation programs of the State Street School and Windsor Jr./Sr. High School, as well as the Health Unlimited programs offered through the Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center.

In addition, the immediate Windsor area offers unusually diverse recreation facilities and programs. These include the John P. Larkin Country Club golf course; Wilgus State Park; Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) trails, Ascutney State Park; St. Gaudens National Historic Site; downhill and cross-country ski facilities at Ascutney Mountain Resort; the Mt. Ascutney Sports and Fitness Center; the year-round programs offered by the Vermont Handicapped Ski and Sports Association; the Windsor Community Center, Mill Pond Aquatic Center (swimming area) and the Windsor Resource Center.

The beauty of Windsor's Connecticut River Valley setting lends a special quality to the unusually rich choices of recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

The ongoing success of Windsor's recreational programs is attributed to the dedicated efforts of the many individuals, municipal departments, and organizations whose commitment to their task is exemplary. The Town Plan recognizes Windsor's fine record of providing a complete range of recreational opportunities to all its citizens. What is being proposed is to recognize what we have, to keep it viable, and to broaden its operations where feasible. Some of Windsor's downtown recreational facilities are shown on a map in the back of the Plan.

Goals

- 1) Attempt to maintain the unusually diverse number of recreational opportunities and continue to make them available for townspeople of all ages. A comprehensive list of all recreational activities in Windsor is attached as Appendix A.

- 2) Create a plan for regularly scheduled maintenance and upkeep of all recreational facilities.
- 3) Broaden accessibility to recreational facilities for handicapped and elderly citizens.
- 4) Provide public access to the Connecticut River.

It is significant to note that maintenance and expansion of Windsor's recreational facilities were strongly supported by participants in the 1996 Town Plan Survey, as well as in previous surveys and town plans. In recognition of this support, it is recommended that the land adjacent to Paradise Park and public swimming areas be protected through the use of buffer zones and other land use patterns.

Recommendations

- 1) Create an inventory of each of Windsor's existing recreational facilities. This project could involve student volunteers, working under the supervision of a faculty advisor, perhaps for academic credit. A suggested listing format for these facilities appears as Appendix B. For some public recreation sites, completion of state Recreation Facilities Inventory forms for use by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation may be advantageous.
- 2) Establish optimum physical standards for each of Windsor's existing recreational facilities. This project could be assisted by a temporary committee including appropriate members of the Municipal Staff, the Director of the Recreation Department, and interested citizens.
- 3) Establish optimum operating and maintenance standards for each of Windsor's existing recreational facilities. This project could also be assisted by an advisory committee.
- 4) Work with State, regional and local officials to maintain or improve water quality standards at Mill Pond.
- 5) Support Municipal funding of activities for the Windsor Community Center Program.
- 6) In response to strong and consistent requests, investigate actively the feasibility, design, construction, and maintenance of a facility to provide public access to the Connecticut River. *"The TOWN should budget for the acquisition and development of a public access to the river, and should provide the necessary facilities for that use."* - Windsor Town Plan, 1986.
- 7) Continue support for and promotion of better use of the Connecticut River as a recreational resource.

3. EDUCATION

The Windsor School District is a member of the Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union (WSSU) which is charged with the administration of special services and business services of four separate school districts: Hartland, Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor. The Windsor District employs a superintendent, two principals (one for the Jr/Sr High School and the other for K-6), and an assistant principal for the Jr/Sr High School, as well as professional support staff. A five-member elected Board of School Directors is responsible for budgets and setting policies for the district.

Windsor opened the doors to its new school, housing grades K-12, with a total capacity of 950 students in March of 1997. Many tuition students come from surrounding areas. The Windsor schools are expecting an enrollment increase of approximately 30 students in the next school year.

Besides a balanced academic program, there are other distinctions making the Windsor Schools a desirable learning environment. They are as follows:

- The Windsor Youth Court was created by the legislature with the cooperation of the civics teacher.
- The State Street School has a partnership with the Vermont Institute of Science, Math and Technology. The school was chosen due to its commitment in these academic areas that relate to the Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities.
- The Lois F. White Theater is included as part of the new building complex.
- The school has state championship-level athletics and a no-cut athletic team policy. The new gym seats 800 and offers a sports walking track that is open to the community.
- The academic program offers advanced placement English and Studio Art.
- The school has recently implemented a new process that requires every teacher and administrator be evaluated annually.
- Town lands (Paradise Park) are accessible as an outdoor classroom adjacent to the school complex. Forestry, wildlife management and other outdoor educational opportunities are at the Windsor Schools doorstep.
- Qualified Windsor Students may attend a program offered at Dartmouth College. Some college freshman classes are offered to students based on space availability.
- Windsor High School Student Vocational needs are met through the Hartford Vocational School.

Education

Continuing Education

Various types of higher education are offered in communities surrounding Windsor. Community College of Vermont has two convenient sites, one in White River Junction and the other in Springfield, VT. In New Hampshire, New Hampshire Technical College in Claremont, Lebanon College in Lebanon, and Dartmouth College in Hanover also offer continuing education programs. In Windsor, various enrichment and health related programs are offered by Health Unlimited through the Mount Ascutney Hospital.

Facility

The main goal of improving the quality of buildings, grounds and learning environment has been addressed by the construction of the new school. The school was designed to accommodate students for at least five years and also designed to be expanded in the future if necessary. Windsor is in a very favorable position in this respect, as other communities struggle with school expansion issues. The new school is located in the center of town, unlike schools in many communities which are located on the fringes of town or in outlying rural areas.

Educational Improvements

Efforts should be made to improve academic performance of students. Tests scores have been rising and now results performance tests can be obtained by using the Internet. This information has always been public but now can be accessed by those wishing to evaluate a community's educational performance. Academic performance, as well as athletics, are often the first lines of research done by companies and individuals desiring to relocate. Every effort should be launched to be certain that Windsor students can compete at higher levels of education and compete in the workforce. The Town of Windsor will support efforts to attract institutions of higher education such as trade and technical schools and colleges.

4. ENERGY

BACKGROUND

The rising cost of sufficient energy to maintain a viable community has led to efforts to conserve existing energy resources and to search for alternative solutions to energy problems. The Town of Windsor is meeting these challenges with policies and strategies for greater energy efficiency.

Most energy resources used by the Town are imported from other primary sources and include hydroelectricity, propane gas, gasoline and fuel oil. It is the goal of the Town to conserve these sources and to promote alternative energy resources.

Goals

- 1) Where feasible and competitive, promote the development of renewable energy resources such as wood, solar energy, hydropower, and wind; promote more efficient utilization of energy through technology such as co-generation.
- 2) Conserve energy in all town buildings through cost-effective measures such as weatherization and reduction of oil dependency. Where feasible, promote the use of alternative energy and energy-efficient resources.
- 3) Provide greater potential for pedestrian and non-motorized traffic.
- 4) Within acceptable industry standards in the region, encourage the reduction of energy consumption in both established and new residential units.
- 5) Within acceptable industry standards in the region, encourage the use of cost-efficient alternative energy resources, including renewable resources, for both new homes and homes being renovated or enlarged.
- 6) Within acceptable industry standards in the region, encourage the construction of energy-efficient homes.
- 7) Increase public awareness among town residents of the link between cost -savings potential, the practice of energy conservation, and the use of alternative energy resources.
- 8) Implement land use patterns that promote the most efficient use of energy.

Recommendations

- 1) Utilize the service of local suppliers as much as possible and provide education to the local population about the benefits to be derived from the use of renewable energy sources.
- 2) Promote the State of Vermont Use Value Appraisal Program to stimulate fuelwood production and improve forest management.
- 3) Encourage energy savings by turning off lights in public and school district buildings.
- 4) Conduct an energy audit with the assistance of an Energy Audit Team to determine specific energy conservation measures in town and school district buildings.
- 5) Ensure that future town and school district facilities will be renovated or designed and

constructed for maximum energy efficiency.

- 6) Encourage public vehicle maintenance to minimize energy costs and maximize efficiency.
- 7) Promote the use of energy-efficient vehicles.
- 8) Assist and encourage car and vanpool programs and investigate the feasibility of a commuter lot.
- 9) Develop and/or maintain an interconnected system of sidewalks and walking/bicycle trails, linking residents to schools, stores, work, and home to encourage non-motorized vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- 10) Increase awareness of energy conservation among town residents by providing information concerning methods of reducing energy consumption in the home (such as weatherization, upgrading to energy efficient appliances, etc.) and methods of using alternative resources.
- 11) Where feasible, ensure the efficient siting of residential units to maximize energy benefits and take advantage of existing infrastructure
- 12) Where feasible, promote the design and location of new roads to coincide with existing and recommended land use patterns as set forth in this document.
- 13) Promote increased use of the Town's Recycling Center.

5. HOUSING

Background

The largest concentration of housing in Windsor lies within one mile of the downtown Central Business District. The reason for this is a combination of natural resource constraints -- mountains, rivers, ponds, and wetlands -- and rich farmland and historic settlement patterns, as discussed in other chapters of the Plan. The housing is dispersed throughout the town in typical rural settlement patterns. Between 1970 and 1990, the total number of housing units in Windsor increased by about 13%, from 1,441 units in 1970 to 1,647 units in 1990, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. As illustrated in Table 1, the percentage increase in Windsor was much smaller than in other communities. The reason for the decrease was a combination of loss of jobs in the machine tool industry and a dramatic increase in service-related jobs in Lebanon and Hanover, N.H. and White River Junction, VT.

Table 1

Growth in Total Housing Units 1970-1990							
Location	TOTAL UNITS			AVERAGE RATES OF CHANGE 70-90			
	1970	1980	1990	Total Percent Change	Per 10 Yrs	Per 5 Yrs	Average Annual Rate
VERMONT	165,063	223,199	271,214	64.3%	28.2%	13.2%	2.5%
WINDSOR COUNTY	17,508	24,275	29,849	70.5%	30.6%	14.3%	2.7%
Andover	158	229	301	90.5%	38.0%	17.5%	3.3%
Baltimore	58	78	88	51.7%	23.2%	11.0%	2.1%
Cavendish	512	649	785	53.3%	23.8%	11.3%	2.2%
Chester	1,014	1,360	1,527	50.6%	22.7%	10.8%	2.1%
Ludlow	1,192	1,726	2,677	124.6%	49.9%	22.4%	4.1%
Reading	267	354	394	47.6%	21.5%	10.2%	2.0%
Springfield	3,561	4,076	4,256	19.5%	9.3%	4.6%	0.9%
Weathersfield	724	1,069	1,249	72.5%	31.3%	14.6%	2.8%
West Windsor	276	487	773	180.1%	67.4%	29.4%	5.3%
Windsor	1,441	1,584	1,647	14.3%	6.9%	3.4%	0.7%
REGION	9,203	11,612	13,697	48.8%	22.0%	10.5%	2.0%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 1970-1990

The average fair market value of a single family house located on fewer than six acres of land increased between 1983 and 1989 from about \$36,900 to \$67,400. The most rapid increase occurred between the two-year period from 1987 to 1989. During this same time span, the average fair market value of vacation homes on fewer than six acres increased by over 400%, from approximately \$32,800 to \$179,300. The average fair market value of mobile home units (excluding land values) in 1983 was approximately \$5,500. By 1989 fair market value had increased by about 21% and was approaching \$6,700.*

There is an obvious disparity between the rate of growth in the average cost of housing and the rate of growth in the income level of Windsor residents during approximately the same time period. Between 1980 and 1985, according to the Vermont Tax Department, residents of Windsor experienced moderate growth in their Median Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) of roughly 20.4%. However, between 1985 and 1989, growth had slowed to 17.6%. Furthermore, in 1980 the MAGI for Windsor (\$13,400) was higher than either the State's

average (\$11,440) or Windsor County's (\$12,140). By 1989, both the State's (\$19,340) and the County's (\$19,837) average had surpassed the Town's (\$18,987). As the gap caused by the disparity of falling wages and increased housing costs continues to widen, the ability of local residents to afford housing declines.

* Statistics from the Vermont Department of Valuation and Review and Ad Hoc Associates, April, 1990.

Goals

- 1) Establish decent affordable housing in a suitable living environment for all residents of the Town of Windsor.
- 2) Ensure sufficient availability of housing types such as single- and multi-family, elderly, special needs, mixed-income and condominium, that are affordable to all residents.
- 3) Preserve, develop or rehabilitate attractive, energy-efficient housing, designed to maintain the character of the residential areas of Town.
- 4) Support the Windsor Housing Advisory Committee and the Rockingham Area Community Land Trust in their efforts to provide affordable housing in a manner that is consistent with Windsor's Town Plan
- 5) Adopt a more regional approach to the provision of affordable housing in order to lessen the burden on those communities already providing their fair share.
- 6) Ensure that the primary focus of Windsor's housing revolving loan fund be directed toward owners of existing single- and multi-family housing who are ineligible for rehabilitation loans through conventional sources.
- 7) Encourage mixed residential and commercial development housing in the downtown business district.
- 8) Begin a comprehensive study of partially blighted areas in town especially Jarvis, Acme, Union, Ascutney and South Main Streets.
- 9) Encourage the development of programs that improve the quality of the housing stock in the town.

Recommendations

- 1) Seek funds to analyze the housing stock in Windsor to determine where housing is inadequate or in need of repair.
- 2) Ensure that the design of any proposed publicly assisted housing is consistent with the characteristics of the surrounding area in terms of unit design and site location.
- 3) Encourage developers planning new housing to consider the location with respect to the physical limitations of the land, proximity to roads, distance from commercial or service centers and other constraints. Scattered housing developments should be discouraged in the rural areas of Town.
- 4) Seek assistance in the form of public funds (grants, loans, etc.) that focus on the preservation, maintenance and rehabilitation of affordable housing.

- 5) Ensure that affordable housing is dispersed rather than concentrated in specific areas of Town by amending the zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations to encourage mixed-income housing patterns.
- 6) Encourage innovative site plans and construction designs that utilize cost-saving materials, efficient site location, and other cost- and energy-efficient methods for the development or rehabilitation of housing.
- 7) Analyze the need for and the availability of funding mechanisms and opportunities to improve existing housing occupied by elderly residents.
- 8) Encourage architectural styles and patterns which are compatible and responsive to traditional building characteristics and land use patterns.
- 9) Seek funds to develop a regional fair-share housing program with neighboring towns.

6. TRANSPORTATION

Background

A viable transportation system is an important social and economic component for the continued growth of a community. The Town of Windsor is fortunate to have a transportation network that provides ready access to most major urban areas in New England. U.S. Route 5, which passes through the central business district of the Town, provides convenient access points to Interstate Highway 91 from both north and south of Town. Amtrak passenger service to Washington, D.C. and regular rail freight service is provided along the eastern edge of Town. Vermont Transit provides daily bus service in nearby Ascutney. In addition, the airport in Lebanon, N.H. provides convenient passenger service for Windsor. This transportation system links Windsor directly with large population centers such as New York City, Montreal, Washington, D.C. and Boston.

Within the community, Connecticut River Transit provides a fixed-route bus system from the village to locations throughout Windsor and surrounding communities. In addition, Connecticut River Transit offers a deviated route for elderly or handicapped individuals through its 5310 program. The Veterans Administration and Volunteers in Action provide rides to medical appointments for veterans and the elderly, and school buses provide rides for Windsor students to Windsor schools and to the Hartford Vocational-Technical Center.

Given these opportunities, the Town has the potential to attract both visitors and businesses to the community. The improvement of the infrastructure (sidewalks, roads, bridges, etc.) will increase the likelihood of this potential becoming a reality. In order to head off problems which could be caused by an aging infrastructure, short-range and long-term transportation planning are necessary.

Goal

- 1) To provide a safe and efficient transportation network which serves the needs of the community in the most effective manner and one which enhances the development goals of the community.

Recommendations

- 1) Continue to improve the quality of the Town's roadways and sidewalks by implementing a road maintenance program that addresses road and sidewalk resurfacing and coordinates such work with the activities of the Sewer and Water Departments.
- 2) Inventory existing transportation services for the elderly and disabled and develop a task force to address the needs of the elderly and disabled populations.
- 3) Participate in regional Transportation Advisory Committee (Southern Windsor County TAC) activities.
- 4) Provide comment to Connecticut River Transit (CRT) on 5310 and other transit related topics.
- 5) Integrate local transportation planning with land use policies.

Local Roads, Pedestrian Walkways and Parking

Background

In the Town of Windsor, there are 32 miles of town highways and eight miles of sidewalk to be maintained. The Town contains 4.14 miles of Class 1 roads, 5.3 miles of Class 2 roads, 23.26 miles of Class 3 roads, and 16.57 miles of State Highway, for a total of 49.27 miles of maintained roads. Installation and repair of drainage facilities, guard rails, roadside tree maintenance, various traffic control activities, application of pavement marking, and street signs are among the responsibilities of the Windsor Highway Department.

In 1998, a feasibility study was conducted to determine a rough cost estimate and feasibility of developing an alternative access to the downtown industrial area. The study concluded that the existence of dense development south of the Goodyear Plant precludes the option of constructing a complete bypass road that would significantly remove truck traffic from Main St. through the downtown. The access road alignment that was studied would primarily serve truck traffic from the north (Exit 9 off I-91) that had either Cone-Blanchard or the Goodyear plant as a destination. The benefits of the road are limited, given the current amount of truck traffic generated from the two sites, and it is not likely that state or federal funding would be available for construction of the road. If future development at the Goodyear plant generates significant truck traffic oriented to the north, then additional justification for constructing the road will exist.

Goals

- 1) To provide a safe, efficient and attractive roadway network that preserves the rural and historic character of Windsor.
- 2) Encourage the efficient management of parking within the Village, to serve both residential and commercial parking needs.
- 3) Encourage new and expanded developments to provide adequate off-street parking.
- 4) Insure that commercial and residential development does not adversely impact traffic flow and maintains acceptable levels of service.

Recommendations

- 1) Annually the Town should conduct a needs assessment of culvert, bridge, roads and sidewalk conditions.
- 2) The Department of Public Works should submit on an annual basis a budget which outlines scheduled improvements including upgrading signs, sidewalks, pavement resurfacing, and bridge and culvert needs.
- 3) Conduct an inventory of on- and off-street parking options.
- 4) The Town should actively solicit off-street municipal parking options through cooperative agreements with individual landowners.
- 5) Control curb cuts and multiple access points on primary roads.
- 6) The Planning Commission should reexamine parking requirements for residential and commercial land uses.
- 7) Assess pedestrian access points from current municipal parking areas.

Rail, Air and Public Transit

Background

The benefits of alternative forms of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, public transit, and freight and passenger rail services include: reduced dependency on motor vehicles, alleviation of traffic congestion, reduced tail-pipe emissions, and preservation of historic village character.

Goals

- 1) Encourage the provision of alternative forms of transportation including public transit, Amtrak passenger service, freight rail service, bicycle and pedestrian pathways.
- 2) In cooperation with local and regional public transit providers, continue to implement transportation programs that address the needs of the elderly and disabled population.
- 3) Support the use of rail as an alternative for the movement of goods.
- 4) Develop land use policies that encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation to maintain the historic and cultural context of Windsor.

Recommendations

- 1) Continue to pursue public transit options including return of Vermont Transit passenger service to Windsor.
- 2) Encourage the use of Amtrak passenger service through promotion and local events.
- 3) Ensure the use of land use techniques which promote compact development.
- 4) Encourage the preservation of existing rail corridors for future transportation purposes.

7. LAND USE

EXISTING LAND USE

Background

Land use patterns in Windsor have developed naturally in a classic village pattern. There is a downtown commercial center near the Connecticut River with industrial uses nearby. The downtown is home to many beautiful historic buildings. Immediately outside of the downtown and to the west of Route 5 are high- and medium-density residential neighborhoods, sprinkled heavily with historic structures. Beyond these neighborhoods are rural residential areas, where large lots are the rule, with some farmland, and large forested areas. All of the high-density residential areas are served by Town water and sewer, as are most of the medium-density residential areas, and portions of the rural residential areas along County Road and Route 44. The density of development and population peaks in and around downtown, and tapers off to the north, south, and west.

Industrial activities have historically occurred in three areas, all between Route 5 and the Connecticut River. The Windsor Industrial Park consists of a total of 23.6 acres. Currently, Simon Pearce Glassblowing and Pottery, Harpoon Brewery, Lebanon Screw Products and Land Air Express occupy the developed lots and the remainder of a permitted Planned Unit Development may still to be developed. This area also now houses a canoe rental establishment and a garden for visitors to stroll through. The second industrial area is a tract of land immediately north of the Weathersfield town line which is currently occupied by Biebel Builders and Miller Construction.

The third industrial area, located east of the railroad tracks, is an area in transition from the heavy industry of the Cone-Blanchard Machine Tool industry and Goodyear to lighter industrial, and a mix of commercial and residential uses. A portion of the buildings on the Cone property are occupied by Seldon Technology, a nanotechnology research and development firm that is expanding to include production of water filtration systems using carbon nanotubes. The former Goodyear plant has been owned by the Connecticut River Development Corporation since 1986 and now houses several small manufacturers and woodworkers as well as a music store and offices. Much of this area is underused – including vacant buildings on the former Cone property, undeveloped land on the southern end of the Cone property, and the vacant Stacey and Railroad properties. –This area that extends from Bridge Street north to the end of the Cone property and between the railroad tracks and the Connecticut River is known as the “Rails to Riverfront” and covers approximately 70 acres.

In 1999, Windsor applied to the Vermont Downtown Board to include the downtown historic district, Court Square and the Rails to Riverfront area as a “Designated Downtown.” Designated downtowns are eligible for state grants and tax credits through the Downtown Program and receive priority for state and federal funds. A later amendment to state enabling legislation for downtown designation added the requirement that the boundaries of the Design Review District must coincide with those of the designated downtown. The Selectboard adopted the expanded Design Review District, including the Main Street and Rails to Riverfront Subdistrict, in 2005.

A large portion of Windsor's total land area (roughly 25%) does not directly contribute to the local tax base. The State of Vermont owns a significant amount of land in Windsor. In the northwestern part of town, the State owns 946 acres on which the Southeast State Correctional Facility is located. Most of this land is undeveloped and available for recreational use. Across from the John D. Larkin Country Club on Route 5, the State owns a 12.4 acre parcel which is occupied by an Agency of Transportation highway garage. In the southern part of town, Mt. Ascutney State Park covers 2,333 acres of land, most of which is used for recreational purposes; two separate areas high on Mt. Ascutney are used for telecommunications equipment. The National Guard Armory, just south of the fairgrounds, sits on 3.5 acres. The Constitution House, a State and National Historic Landmark, sits on a small parcel on North Main Street.

Discussed below, and shown on the Existing Land Use Map which is included with this Plan, is an illustration of existing development patterns.

Existing Land Use - Residential

Currently, residential development is concentrated near Windsor's downtown where the most municipal services are provided. There is a mix of single- and multi-family housing with single-family housing becoming prevalent west of Route 5.

Many of the high-density residential areas, which are closest to downtown and served by town water and sewer, are very near to complete build-out. However, a substantial amount of undeveloped or underused land exists for infill high-density residential or mixed use development in the former industrial area between the railroad tracks and the Connecticut River. Streets are town-owned and paved, and have sidewalks.

Medium-density residential areas lie immediately outside the high-density areas moving away from the downtown. Portions of these areas are served by town water or sewer, as reflected in current zoning, under which minimum lot size varies from 12,000 to 40,000 square feet, depending upon the availability of town utilities. The medium-density residential areas, as defined by the current zoning map, are not entirely developed; however, there are many limits to development, including: significant wetlands, rare and endangered species, flood plains, lake shores, preserved park lands, and the wellhead protection area. These natural resources represent features that the Town considers important for conservation.

In the further reaches of the town, low-density residential development predominates, and is permitted by current zoning, in minimum lot sizes ranging from 40,000 square feet to 25 acres. The preferred density depends on several factors, such as topography, scenic preservation, suitability of soil for on-site sewage disposal, existing roads, and the possibility of more appropriate uses which may not be compatible with higher densities of residential development.

Existing Land Use - Mixed Use & Commercial

Most mixed-use commercial and residential activity in Windsor is limited to the immediate downtown area, but commercial uses are also scattered north and south along Route 5. Downtown commercial uses consist of retail stores, banks, and business offices on the ground floor with residential apartments on the second and third floors. Route 5 south is notable for its stretch of single-family residences and scenic farm land along the Connecticut River.

Currently, Windsor has two active industrial/commercial centers in town and the Windsor Industrial Park to the north. South of downtown there is no connecting sewer line from the main sewage plant south to the Weston Heights plant, which is currently at capacity.

Existing Land Use - Industrial

Industrial uses are currently encouraged in three sections of town as listed in the introductory background of the Land Use section of this Plan. The Windsor Industrial Park is almost full, and the site now offers recreational amenities in addition to the "See it Made" theme that allows visitors to view pottery, glass-blowing and beer-making in action. Industrial uses are also allowed on Route 5 to the south of the industrial park, where they have access to town water and sewer, as well as easy access to the Interstate.

The southernmost industrial area is not fully utilized, but may be the best location for heavier industrial development. The downtown industrial area, which historically has been the core manufacturing area, is occupied by older industrial buildings that are currently occupied, but underused. Seldon Technology, a nanotechnology firm, occupies a portion of the former Cone manufacturing building. Several small manufacturers, woodworkers, offices and retail uses occupy buildings on the former Goodyear campus. Efforts are ongoing to redevelop this area known as the "Rails to Riverfront" into mixed residential, commercial and light industrial development. .

Existing Land Use - Agricultural and Open

Agriculture in Vermont has been on the decline for many years and agriculture in Windsor typifies this decline. The largest tracts of prime agricultural land in town lie in the flood plain along the Connecticut River both north and south of the downtown area. These strips of good usable farmland are valuable not only for their agricultural function, but also for their scenic and cultural significance in the Connecticut River Corridor and for their capacity to store and convey flood waters.

Since even "postage stamp" gardens can produce significant yields of fruits and vegetables to their owners, agricultural uses of any scale should be encouraged in every part of town. Roadside stands and farmers' markets for selling locally grown produce should be supported by the community. Although large-scale agriculture is fading from the Vermont scene, smaller "market gardens" are on the increase and such ventures must be encouraged.

Existing Land Use - Outdoor Recreation and Forest Lands

Since a large majority of forest land in Windsor is publicly owned, it also doubles as recreation land. Town-owned recreation lands, such as the Mill Pond beach area, Paradise Park, and the Fairgrounds, are discussed in the Public Lands and Recreation sections of the Municipal Services/Utilities and Facilities portion of this Plan. The two largest tracts of forest land in Windsor are owned by the State of Vermont: 946 acres at the prison farm, mostly wooded; and at Mount Ascutney State Park, 2,333 acres, virtually all wooded. These two State-owned woodlots and Town-owned Paradise Park do not appear to be in danger of change to non-recreational use. Due to the pressures of development, wildlife habitat in Paradise Park may be at risk of becoming adversely isolated. Timber management on the State-owned forest lands must be expected, but should be designed to have minimal impact on recreational uses, scenic resources and wildlife habitats. Despite the abundance of forest and recreation lands in Windsor, Town-owned access to the Connecticut River is lacking.

FUTURE LAND USE

Background

Throughout Windsor, historic settlement patterns have resulted in the establishment of unique geographic areas. These patterns should be continued and reinforced by directing growth to designated areas as identified in planning and implementation documents and through planned investment in public infrastructure.

Windsor's future settlement patterns will be determined by a blend of community attitudes and desires, economic forces, natural constraints, existing development patterns and land use regulations. Balancing the needs of each of these factors is the fundamental premise for the land use plan.

Of those who responded to the question of land use in town, over 60% of respondents said they wanted to see more commercial, residential, outdoor recreation, and conservation land use. The types of economic development most encouraged were (in order of the types most highly encouraged) technology-based services, retail, hospitality services (including restaurants, B&B's and tourism/recreational businesses), resource-based businesses (agriculture and forestry), and professional services. Light industry was supported after the aforementioned types of development. In both the land use and economic development questions, state institutions were the least encouraged for new development. Residents also ranked forest, wetlands, lakes, rivers, water quality, wildlife habitat, ecologically significant areas as lands most in need of protection. The results of this public opinion survey provide a glimpse of the community attitude and desires.

As Windsor responds to development pressures, the community should consider the appropriate course of action for guiding growth. Random development, responding only to market forces, can have serious implications within the community including loss of historic, aesthetic and natural resources, traffic congestion and parking problems, inadequate public facilities and services, and strip development.

However, controlling development does not mean stopping growth. Windsor should thoughtfully anticipate growth and determine where, and at what pace, development can be

supported. The Future Land Use map included in this chapter is the first step toward anticipating and directing future growth.

Note: The Future Land Use map included in this Plan is a basic tool for resource management and planning purposes. The land use designations described below correspond with the designations included on the Future Land Use map. The land use designations provide a standard system by which units of land can be categorized. For the purposes of the discussion in the Town Plan, the future land use designations are intended to provide a broad, overall vision of future development; they are not intended to be used for parcel-specific comparison. The reader is advised to treat the future land use map as a broad-brush vision of how the Town and Village may look in the future, and the reader is cautioned to avoid associating land use designations with zoning district boundaries.

The Future Land Use map is a representation of the basic land use patterns that the Town would like to see develop in the years to come. As stated above, it is not intended to be parcel-specific, and its categories are not all mutually exclusive. It is intended to show the types and relative concentrations of development that are most appropriate for different parts of Windsor. This information is meant to: help the town maintain and update effective implementation bylaws; give clear guidance on local priorities in state planning and regulatory proceedings; and provide landowners and developers with a tool that will help them locate and design projects in efficient and locally acceptable ways.

One of the most important aspects of planning for future land use patterns is coordination of public investments in local infrastructure. By directing development within the guidelines of the Future Land Use map, the Town can ensure that future investments in roads, water and sewer lines, sidewalks, etc. will not place an unnecessary burden on taxpayers. Conversely, if the Town has an idea of where different types of growth should occur, it can construct utilities and other services in advance, as a way to attract development to Windsor while maintaining some control over its pace and location. Development in any land use designation must be carefully planned in order to maintain the outstanding natural resource characteristics of the area.

The Future Land Use map is based in large part on two important ideas: first, that historical development patterns are what make Windsor attractive, and will foster a healthy economy, strong community spirit, and a stable and affordable tax structure; second, that the most intensive development (commercial, industrial, and medium- to large-scale residential) should occur first and at the fastest pace in and around established and designated centers of these activities. Outlying areas should grow at a slower pace, and should see relatively lower-intensity and lower-density uses.

Future Land Use - Residential

The residential designation provides an area for residential and other compatible uses at densities appropriate for the physical characteristics of the land and the availability of community facilities and services. Residential land uses will predominate within these areas, but dispersed agricultural and open land, isolated commercial and/or home based businesses, and country inns and Bed & Breakfasts may be appropriate within some residential areas. In some rural areas, where preservation of open lands, wildlife habitat, or

scenic views is a priority, cluster development may be an appropriate or preferred development approach.

Future Land Use - Mixed Use

The mixed-use designation denotes areas which will combine a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. At the core of the mixed-use area is the traditional village setting. The area known as the Rails to Riverfront is a prime location for infill residential, light industrial and commercial development, as well as an extension of the central business district. On average, mixed-use areas will encompass varying densities of development, but may also include higher density development. Multi-family housing may also be found in these areas dependent upon adequate water supply and sewage disposal. Zoning districts within the mixed-use area will vary to accommodate the variety of historical uses that have occurred in the past, and the transitional nature of some districts within the mixed-use area.

Future Land Use - Industrial

The industrial designation makes provision for uses which are inappropriate for commercial or residential areas. The overriding use within the industrial area will be light industry, including light manufacturing. There may be a few remaining residences within the industrial area; however, future residential development is to be discouraged.

There is a continued interest in maintaining the integrity of the downtown commercial district while enhancing the linkage with the commercial and industrial activities at the Industrial Park.

Future Land Use - Open and Agricultural

The open and agricultural designation includes a diverse area of forested and agricultural uses, open fields, and transitional growth areas between open and forested (scrub brush). In these areas, clustered or low density development may occur as long as it maximizes the area of land on which agricultural uses may occur (including forestry, tree farms, and other horticultural activities may occur (including forestry, tree farms, and other horticultural activities). Development plans should also consider the aesthetic and rural nature of these areas.

Future Land Use - Forest

This consists of areas which are predominantly coniferous and broadleaf forests. These areas include State land, and/or other forested areas where access is limited due to difficult terrain and other environmental factors. Logging and other forestry practices should predominate in these areas, although low density residential uses and appropriate outdoor recreational uses could be interspersed with forest uses.

Future Land Use - Outdoor Recreation

This designation consists of areas designated for large-scale outdoor recreation, including but not limited to hiking, camping and snowmobiling. Other varied land uses may occur in these areas, but will be comprised primarily of low density residential, agricultural and forestry uses. Any commercial services provided within this designation will directly support the outdoor recreation activity.

Future Land Use - Conservation

This area is designated for preservation based on unique environmental characteristics, such as wetlands, shorelines, rare and endangered plant and animal species and aquifer recharge areas.

Future Land Use - Institutional

This land is reserved for continued use by government and civic institutions. Examples include schools, cemeteries, churches, health care facilities, sewage treatment plants, etc. Institutional land may also be found interspersed throughout mixed-use areas, and occasionally in residential and other areas.

Goals

- 1) Preserve the historic development pattern of mixed-use village areas surrounded by open land, agriculture, forest and low-density residential uses.
- 2) Develop only those land use regulations necessary to protect and preserve the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors, Windsor's economic viability, and important natural and historic resources, and to effectively reduce municipal costs to support development.
- 3) Direct growth and development toward areas of Town where it will be most effective and efficient to provide the necessary public infrastructure and services.
- 4) Update land use regulations for consistency with the goals stated in this Plan.
- 5) New development should require minimal investment in capital improvements by the town.
- 6) Develop a diverse economic base that will provide jobs and have no undue adverse affect on surrounding neighborhoods.
- 7) Improve access to the mixed-use "Rails to Riverfront" district.
- 8) Support efforts to revitalize and redevelop the industrial and commercial base within the designated downtown in a way that enhances the vitality and livability of the downtown while restoring employment opportunities for local residents
- 9) Establish priorities for preservation and/or development of prime agricultural land..
- 10) Maintain the current acreage of recreation and forest land available for public use in Windsor.
- 11) Acquire public access to the Connecticut River in Windsor.
- 12) Establish a north-south greenway, as close as possible to the Connecticut River, through Windsor.
- 13) Encourage housing developments to include a mix of housing types in order to accommodate the needs of households with low and moderate incomes.

Recommendations

- 1) Where development may encroach unnecessarily on farmlands, recreation lands, or wildlife habitat, the town should encourage cluster type development.
- 2) Review and revise the zoning bylaws to ensure compliance with the Town Plan.
- 3) Regularly update the Capital Budget and Program to reflect the goals of this Plan.
- 4) Ensure that the pace of new development does not outstrip the Town's ability to provide necessary public services, through the use of bylaws and through strategic investment in public infrastructure.
- 5) Coordinate local land use planning activities with local conservation and recreation groups, local and regional economic development agencies, and historic preservation groups.
- 6) Discourage development near shorelines, wetlands, rare and endangered species sites, steep slopes, and flood prone areas.
- 7) Development should not disrupt scenic viewsheds.
- 8) Actively explore cooperative agreements between landowners and the Town to meet on-street and off-street public parking needs. Provide adequate signage to clearly direct visitors to public parking areas.
- 9) Review permit applications for commercial developments outside the downtown area with the potential impacts on the downtown business climate in mind.
- 10) Encourage appropriate corridor development along major transportation routes outside of village areas.
- 11) Direct the placement of appropriate governmental buildings, such as municipal offices, state offices, and Post Offices, to downtown areas, and utilize existing space whenever possible.
- 12) Actively encourage downtown revitalization and beautification programs and projects.
- 13) Support public and private efforts to conserve prime agricultural land.
- 14) Discourage future expansion of Southeast State Correctional Facility at its present site or in other areas of the Town.
- 15) Seek easements or land purchases to gain public access to the Connecticut River for recreational use.
- 16) Promote the development of a Connecticut River Corridor Greenway through Windsor.
- 17) The removal of any additional lands from the tax rolls must be very carefully considered, especially with regard to the likely impact on the remaining tax base.
- 18) Invite and actively encourage public participation in local planning and development activities.
- 19) Consider strict access management measures along Route 5 north to prevent strip development, particularly in the area north of the Country Club.
- 20) Develop an open space plan in order to lay out priorities for open space preservation and protection.

8. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GROUNDWATER/WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS (WHPA)

Background

Groundwater is the primary source for drinking water in the town, and has many points of exchange both to and from surface water systems. Windsor's municipal water supply comes from wells on Pumping Station Road near Lake Runnemedede. The wells are fed by a "confined unconsolidated aquifer," as defined by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Supply Division. The Water Supply Division identifies Public Water Source Protection Areas for each Public water system source. Groundwater sources are protected through the delineation of Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs), which "include recharge areas, transmission zones and groundwater storage areas." The approximate area of the WHPA, which the Water Supply Division defines as "the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or field, supplying a Public water system, through which contaminants are likely to move toward and reach such water well or field," is 175 acres. This area encompasses Lake Runnemedede, a large portion of Paradise Park, and sections of high and medium density residential neighborhoods (see map in Appendix). All buildings within the WHPA are served by Town water and sewer. If properly protected, this abundant source of excellent drinking water should provide for Windsor's community water needs well into the future.

Concerns have been raised regarding continuing detection of toxic substances on the school property. These issues were addressed by removal of hazardous soils in the playing field area. The ground was then filled and recontoured. However, there is a potential groundwater plume that has not been, and cannot by all practical means be, eliminated. This plume should be monitored to protect the towns water supply in Lake Runnemedede.

Goal

- 1) Protect Windsor's community water supply by minimizing the introduction of new sources of pollution, and containing existing sources of pollution, within the Wellhead Protection Area.

Recommendations

- 1) Do not allow salt or salted sand piles and limit the use of road salt in the WHPA.
- 2) No new roads or parking areas should be allowed in the WHPA.
- 3) No new on-site sewage disposal systems or floor drains discharging on-site should be allowed in the WHPA.
- 4) Do not allow on-site disposal of hazardous waste, including disposal of household hazardous waste through on-site sewage disposal systems.
- 5) New and existing on-site underground storage tanks should be designed, installed, and inspected in accordance with the Agency of Natural Resources Underground Storage Tank Regulations for Aquifer Protection Areas or Class II Groundwater Areas.
- 6) All storm water runoff should be diverted away from the wells and the Wellhead Protection Area.

- 7) Any use of herbicides or pesticides within the WHPA must be strongly discouraged.
- 8) Chemically treated swimming pool or hot tub water should not be drained in WHPA.
- 9) Create an overlay district to protect the WHPA through zoning.
- 10) Protect the integrity of the Mill Pond dam, so that flood waters do not carry pollution into the WHPA.
- 11) Monitor the soils, surface water and groundwater to ensure that hazardous substances from the contaminated site at the high school do not contaminate the town water supply or surface waters.

SHORELANDS/SURFACE WATERS/WETLANDS

Background

Shorelands, surface waters, and wetlands are parts of very fragile and important ecosystems (see map in Appendix). Surface waters, wetlands, and adjacent land areas provide recreational and educational opportunities (fishing, boating, wildlife viewing, etc.), and contribute to the scenic and aesthetic properties of Windsor. They also supply local residents with food (by providing habitat for fish and wildlife) and drinking water (through exchanges with groundwater sources). Proper protection of these areas is vital to the protection of water quality, the basis of all life on our planet. We want our waters to be beautiful, clean, and accessible.

The Connecticut River Corridor is still partially undeveloped and much of the land within 500 feet of the river is open farmland. However, there is some industrial, commercial, and residential property along the river as well. Both types of riverfront property are valuable assets, and the town should support efforts to improve environmental and aesthetic resources along the river banks.

Other valuable shorelands in Windsor surround Mill Pond, Lake Runnemede, and several major streams. The Town owns shoreline and the Town beach on Mill Pond. Paradise Park abuts Lake Runnemede, and the Town water wells are by the shore of Lake Runnemede. The shores of these two major water bodies are largely undeveloped, though future development pressure seems likely. The Town Wellhead Protection Area encompasses all of Lake Runnemede and most of Paradise Park, therefore it is adequately protected.

Valuable public and private wetlands are scattered throughout Windsor. The Town has historically provided no special protection to these fragile and indispensable natural resources. One large wetland is located in the Wellhead Protection Area and may have a direct impact on the quality and quantity of groundwater used by the community water system. Another is located along Mill Brook just upstream from Mill Pond, which serves as the Town's swimming pool. This wetland provide important wildlife habitat, and removes significant quantities of pollutants from water entering the pond. Wetlands also provide flood storage capacity and can be used as valuable educational tools. All wetlands in Windsor deserve special attention and protection.

Goals

- 1) Prevent nutrients (especially phosphorus) and sediments from entering Windsor's wetlands and surface waters.
- 2) Strive for aesthetically pleasing shoreland landscapes with buffers of natural vegetation on all shores and around all wetlands, while providing as much free access as possible to the shores of the Connecticut River, Mill Pond, and Lake Runnemedede.
- 3) Prevent the introduction of Eurasian milfoil to unaffected water bodies.
- 4) Encourage the conservation of wetlands so they can continue to provide valuable wildlife habitat.

Recommendations

Phosphorus influences surface water quality in Vermont more than any other single pollutant. Controlling the introduction of phosphorus into Windsor's surface and ground waters is critical to maintaining the quality of these waters. To help keep out the phosphorus, as well as other pollutants:

- 1) Maintain buffers of natural vegetation around surface waters. Buffer width should depend on soil conditions and slope.
- 2) Prevent erosion of disturbed soil, particularly if there is danger of sediment being washed directly into wetlands, lakes, streams, or rivers. Routine measures may include the use of diversion dikes, vegetated buffers, seeding and mulching, hay bale sediment traps, and barriers consisting of a snow and silt fence combination.
- 3) Require boaters to clean Eurasian milfoil from boats after use in infested waters (i.e. Mill Pond), and before use in unaffected waters, to prevent the spread of this noxious weed.
- 4) Provide relevant public education concerning the control of Eurasian milfoil, with the goal of eliminating the problem in all local surface waters.
- 5) Paths providing access to shores should not run straight down to the shore so that they provide a conduit for runoff. They should zig-zag down the slope.
- 6) Control the cutting of vegetation in buffer areas.
- 7) Discourage the use (or presence) of fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, and other hazardous chemicals in and near surface waters and wetlands.
- 8) Maintain adequate buffers between on-site sewage disposal systems and surface waters or wetlands. Be sure septic design regulations are enforced.
- 9) Adopt and implement the Connecticut River Corridor Management Plan as proposed by the Connecticut River Joint Commissions.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

Background

Flood hazard areas are areas which in any given year have at least a one percent chance of being inundated by flood waters. This is known as a 100-year flood event. A map of flood-prone areas is located in the town office.

Windsor residents owning buildings in the floodplain may purchase flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) because Windsor has set development

standards for the flood hazard area which meet minimum NFIP standards. Through the NFIP Community Rating System (CRS), a town which exceeds the minimum requirements may qualify for a special classification which would reduce flood insurance rates for its policy holders. There are currently 44 policies held in Windsor with \$2,030,000 in coverage. Any development in the floodplain requires local flood hazard review.

The Connecticut River, which drains 4,700 square miles by the time it reaches Windsor, and Mill Brook, which drains 42 square miles, are the primary sources of floodwaters in Windsor. Major flood events have been recorded in Windsor in 1866, 1896, 1913, 1927, 1936, 1938, 1973, 1976, 1977, and 1979.

Goals

- 1) Increase disaster preparedness of critical town services to enhance public safety, avoid economic destruction, and reduce human suffering from flood losses.
- 2) Prevent flood damage through land use policies and regulations that control development in flood hazard areas and recognize the natural flood storage capabilities of wetlands.

Recommendations

- 1) Advise residents about flood hazard, flood insurance, and flood protection measures.
- 2) Ensure that potential purchasers of flood prone property are aware of the hazard.
- 3) When property is subdivided in flood prone areas, require subdivision plats to clearly show elevations and borders of flood prone areas.
- 4) Maintain a library of references on flood insurance sources and flood protection in the Municipal Building.
- 5) Preserve floodplain areas for conveyance and storage of floodwaters.
- 6) Regulate new development outside the floodplain to minimize adverse effects of increased stormwater runoff on the floodplain.
- 7) Maintain the capacities of drainage channels and detention facilities, and avoid substantial reductions in flood storage through wetland destruction.
- 8) Through the Windsor Fire Dept., provide flood warning to the public and develop a response plan.
- 9) Investigate the possibility of earning an improved CRS classification for the Town in order to decrease the adverse effects of flooding on the community and reduce flood insurance rates.

WILDLIFE HABITAT/NATURAL AREAS

Background

There are five key ingredients of wildlife habitat: food, cover, water, space, and arrangement. The wise use of our natural resources through effective planning and zoning will provide a wide diversity of wildlife for all to enjoy.

Along with surface waters, wetlands, and shorelands, forest land is especially valuable as wildlife habitat, and should be managed as an important natural resource. Policies regarding the use of forest land are discussed in the Land Use chapter of this plan.

Windsor also possesses several unique and outstanding natural areas. These are areas that deserve special attention because they contain rare plant or animal species; provide unique or irreplaceable economic, aesthetic, recreational, or educational value; or represent an outstanding or unique example of a particular type of natural feature or habitat. Examples include Lake Runnemedede, Mill Pond, Paradise Park, Ascutney State Park, and Natural Heritage inventory sites as shown on the Natural Resources Map.

Goals

- 1) Encourage innovative site plans which minimize impacts on wildlife habitat.
- 2) Promote a heightened level of awareness among the general public concerning the fact that most natural areas contain wildlife habitats which deserve our respect and protection.
- 3) Maintain travel corridors for wildlife that require them.

Recommendations

- 1) Consider the potential impact of any development proposal on wildlife.
- 2) Don't allow Paradise Park to become so isolated that animals requiring territory larger than the park are no longer able to move freely in and out of the park borders to at least one other large tract of woodland.
- 3) Surface water must be kept clean for wildlife. (See "Shorelands/ Surface Waters/Wetlands")
- 4) Maintain up-to-date maps of deer wintering areas and other significant wildlife habitats, particularly if threatened or endangered species are involved as recognized under state or federal law. Encourage innovative site plans, including buffer zones, to minimize the impact on these areas.
- 5) Establish a Conservation Commission to inventory significant plant and animal species and their locations, map wildlife travel corridors, and to advise the Planning Commission on these and other matters concerning the natural environment.
- 6) Study options of preserving significant habitats and woodlands such as the purchase, donation, or transfer of development rights.
- 7) Encourage local school use of environmental educational programs, including the Environmental Learning for the Future (ELF) program sponsored by the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS), to instruct children on environmental issues.
- 8) Encourage the use of cluster development for the purposes of preserving open space.
- 9) Maintain adequate food, water, shelter, and travel corridors for wildlife.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Background

The Town of Windsor has played a conspicuous and important role in the history of Vermont and of the United States. Groundbreaking political events have taken place in Windsor: the signing of the Vermont Constitution in 1777 on Main Street established the Republic of Vermont and set an important precedent for the guarantee of personal freedom enjoyed today by all Americans. Windsor was home, in the 19th Century, to the birth of the American machine tool industry and to the pioneering of mass production techniques; a local factory supplied federal troops with rifles during the Civil War. This part of the town's history is preserved and explained today at the American Precision Museum. Windsor was also important in the early development of Vermont's legal and correctional systems.

The town's role in the making of regional, state, and national history is a source of pride and community spirit for local residents. It is also an economic engine for the town and the region. The development and promotion of "heritage tourism" can simultaneously preserve valuable resources and support the local economy.

Windsor's architectural heritage spans the late Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and early Twentieth Centuries and represents the entire spectrum of commercial, domestic, and public architectural styles. Individual buildings and the streetscapes on Main Street and around the Common create a downtown with many of its historic resources intact. Only a few non-contributing buildings interrupt the cohesiveness of five distinct areas in Town. Those areas are:

- a) Upper Main Street Historic District listed on the State Register of Historic Places extends along both sides of North Main Street from approximately 100 feet North of the Constitution House to approximately 25 feet north of the Stoughton House, encompassing approximately 500 feet both east and west of Main Street.
- b) Main Street Historic District listed on the State Register of Historic Places includes the downtown area, from approximately 25 feet north of Stoughton House, encompassing 500 feet both East and West of Main Street to Durkee Street. Also included are Depot Street and lower State Street between Main Street and Court Square.
- c) Court Square Historic District listed on the State Register of Historic Places encompasses approximately 250 feet from any point on the center line of a parallel and adjacent perimeter street to form a perimeter around Court Square.
- d) The Ascutney Mill Dam Historic District listed on the State Register of Historic Places centers around the Ascutney Mill Dam and surrounding buildings. The boundaries are Ascutney Street, Union Street, a parallel line approximately 300 feet west of Clough Avenue and a parallel line approximately 400 feet south of Union Street.

State historic districts are catalogued in the Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey, which is a list of "districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects" of local, state, and national significance in "history, architecture, archeology, and culture" maintained by the state Division for Historic Preservation. The state survey characterizes the building stock in areas a, b, and c as "excellent, if not outstanding." Together, these three contiguous areas also comprise a National Historic District along with Phelps Court. The National Register of Historic Places is "the official federal listing of historic, architectural and archeological

resources worthy of preservation.” A map of Windsor’s Historic Districts is included at the end of the plan.

Another important part of Windsor’s history and heritage is agriculture. Agriculture has seen significant declines in recent years, but has historically played an important part in Windsor’s culture and economy. Policies for the use of agricultural land are discussed in the Land Use chapter.

Goals

- 1) Preserve the existing facades, and, to the extent possible, preserve the historic integrity of the interiors of all buildings of historic significance.
- 2) Investigate aesthetic regulations for signage.
- 3) Ensure compatibility of new buildings and additions in the Historic Districts.
- 4) Promote the cultural heritage (local, state, and national) of Windsor, in order to protect historic resources and expand the heritage tourism economy.
- 5) Maintain and extend of the inventory of historic districts and landmarks.
- 6) Identify significant archeological sites that may be hidden or not readily apparent.

Recommendations

- 1) Utilize the Windsor Historic Preservation Commission as advisors to the Planning Commission for review of exterior changes in buildings, demolition, and new construction within locally designated Historic Districts or involving Historic Landmarks.
- 2) Utilize Historic Windsor, Inc. staff and volunteers, and volunteers from the Windsor Historical Society for assistance, planning, and implementation of preservation projects in the community.
- 3) Encourage and support the concept of historic, or heritage, tourism and make the promotion of local and regional historical and cultural resources a priority of the community in order to increase the number of tourists visiting Windsor annually.
- 4) Review Land Use regulations to insure that they encourage use and reuse of existing buildings and carefully control land use, signage, and parking in locally designated Historic District(s).
- 5) Encourage the Board of Selectmen to enact tax incentives for rehabilitation of buildings and compatible new construction in the Historic Districts.
- 6) Encourage the town to provide the highest quality maintenance and upkeep of all cemeteries in Windsor.
- 7) Develop an article for town vote regarding a tax incentive for the purchase of vacant historic residences for owner-occupants.
- 8) The Planning Commission should work cooperatively with the Historic Preservation Commission and Listers to alter the perception of citizens that they will be penalized through increased taxes for improvements to the exterior of their homes.

9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Background

History

Windsor's economy has traditionally been based largely on industry and manufacturing. As long ago as the early 1800s, the foundation for the American industrial revolution was being laid in Windsor. The town's industrial base took shape and expanded during the years leading up to the turn of the Century, and remained strong for another 75 years or more. Its growth went beyond town borders and blossomed throughout the region, most notably in Springfield. The design and manufacture of machine tools were so prevalent in the regional economy during this period, and played such an important role in the industry at the national scale, that the area became known as Precision Valley.

During the past 20 years, national and international economic trends have brought major changes to Windsor. Manufacturing continues to play an important role in the local and regional economy, but conditions for local industry have been turbulent, and its prominence has faded. The challenge over the past 20 years has been the identification and establishment of businesses that provide a more diversified work base and are more resilient to economic changes.

Analysis of a Changing Economy

In 2003, the Town hired the firm of Economic Policy Resources (EPR) to complete an analysis of the factors facing Windsor's economy and opportunities for revitalization, particularly in the Rails to Riverfront area. This area includes the former Cone and Goodyear properties and others located between the railroad tracks and the Connecticut River, with Cone on the north and Bridge Street the boundary on the southern end. Although the study was commissioned as part of the Rails to Riverfront planning process, the information gathered and conclusions reached apply to the town as a whole. Much of the information included in the study (entitled *A Strategic Approach for the Development/Re-Development of the Rails to River Area* - November 2003) has been incorporated to this chapter of the Town Plan.

As stated in the EPR report, the world has changed and it is still changing. New trade agreements, scientific and technological advances, and the increased use of computers and the information highway, are national and global economic forces that have a large impact on what the Town can accomplish within its economic development agenda. These forces include the following:

- a. Markets are becoming increasingly global.
 - b. Technological innovation continues to advance rapidly.
 - c. The "New Economy" has fundamentally changed the nature of economic competition.
 - d. The population is aging and population growth has slowed in the Northeast, but particularly in the southern Windsor County region.
 - e. As the Baby-Boomers age, they are more demanding in the way of quality-of-life.
- These forces have far-reaching implications for the Town. Economic development policy must be made considering these factors. The Town cannot rely on the past activities and ways of action that made Windsor a successful economic development engine through the 1940's up to the 70's. Future economic development will need to focus on creating business opportunities where: (1) productivity, both material and knowledge-based, is an important part of the competitiveness equation, (2) the capability of companies to apply knowledge and

technology to the manufacturing of their product or service is key to success, (3) policies are sensitive to the needs of an aging workforce, as well as supportive of retaining the youth of the region, and (4) policies are in sync with the desires of a population that values “quality of life” as a key element in where they live and work.

Windsor’s Economic Development Climate

Since the loss of the two largest employers in town, Goodyear and Cone-Blanchard, household incomes fell from being comparable or slightly higher than household incomes at the county and state level in 1989, to being in the 80th percentile in 1999 (see Figure 1).

Windsor’s population has recovered somewhat since 1990, and businesses have filled most of the storefronts on Main Street (see Figure 2). A significant amount of planning and environmental assessment work has been completed on much of the downtown industrial area in preparation for redevelopment. The strong economy of the Upper Valley has resulted in a tight housing market that brings many who work in the Hanover and Lebanon area to Windsor in search of housing. Windsor’s current challenge is to continue the work of rebuilding and revitalizing its downtown while working to achieve a balance of jobs and housing. A strong employment base in or near the downtown is important for maintaining and building a strong downtown business district.

According to the EPR study, some of the key local factors impacting Windsor’s economic development efforts are as follows:

- The area is home to a mobile work force that appears willing to travel significant distances for “quality job opportunities.”
- The economy of the region as a whole since 1979 has not kept pace with either statewide average growth or the growth in the national economy.
- Since 1979, a major reason behind the region’s lagging economic performance rests in the manufacturing sector that has experienced a dramatic 73.0% decline since the 1970s.

Figure 1 – Windsor Household Incomes 1989-

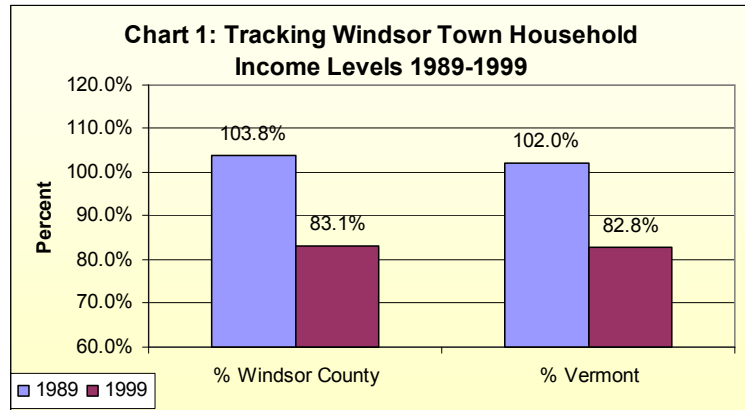
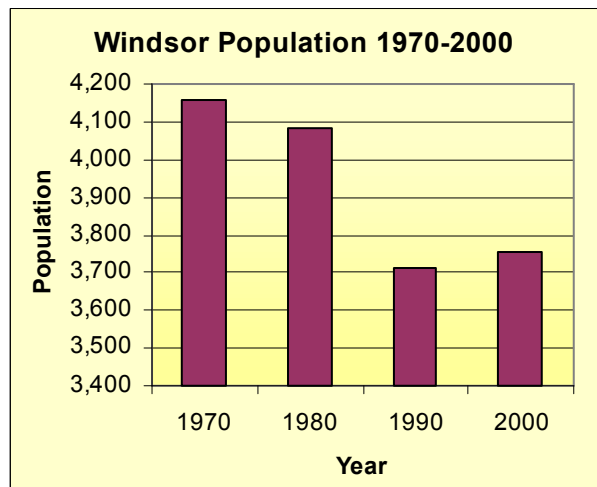


Figure 2 – Windsor Population 1970-2000



- Population statistics show that the region has been losing a disproportionate share of its young population, indicating the possibility of a “brain-drain” in the region.
- The Town does not have the capacity to train and prepare a local workforce that is capable of adapting to technology and the demands of the global marketplace.

Employment and Wages

Since 1990, employment trends in Windsor have been mixed. The addition by Simon Pearce of a manufacturing facility and Harpoon brewing facility, both in the Windsor Industrial Park, have been positive steps. Mount Ascutney Hospital, the largest employer in town, has been expanding in recent years. Revitalization of several downtown properties are completed or underway, and most are fully leased. Most of the leasable space in the former Goodyear Campus has been filled, and the Cone property has changed hands, with its current high-tech tenant planning to expand.

The EPR Report characterized several employment sectors as “regionally significant.” According to the report, industries that import dollars and create a multiplier effect are termed “base” industries in economic development theory. Base industries within the entire Windsor County region were measured against specific criteria to determine if they are significant to the region’s economy. Those base or export-oriented industries that surpass a threshold of economic significance are termed “strategic industries” from an economic development perspective. Table 1, below, presents the sectors in Southern Windsor County and the changes in employment between 1979 and 2000, and relative wages in these sectors.

Table 1 – Employment and Wages in Windsor County 1979-2000

Industry Sector	Regionally Significant Sectors		
	Employment	% Regional	% State Sector
	Growth 1979-2000	Avg. Wage 2000	Avg. Wage 2000
Lumber & Wood Products	(182)	94.8%	100.0%
Furniture	111	83.9%	78.8%
Fabricated Metals	175	68.0%	103.4%
Industry Machinery	(2,692)	78.1%	144.4%
Printing & Publishing	244	99.6%	110.3%
Real Estate	144	110.6%	107.7%
Plastics Products*	(297)	103.7%	127.9%
Communications	(338)	118.8%	187.5%
Health Services	933	87.4%	96.9%
Engineering & Management Services	563	107.2%	162.2%
Travel & Tourism	1,169	>100%	>100%

Table developed by Economic Policy Resources, with data from Census 2000

According to the EPR report, the businesses in these industrial sectors combined with the 13 strongest industrial sectors of the Vermont economy make up the greatest prospects for job creation in Windsor. Job creation strategies should focus on building working relationships with businesses in these sectors.

Local Assets and Opportunities

Windsor has a number of assets that can serve to attract new development and expand existing businesses. These assets include the following:

1. **Access - Excellent Interstate access (I-91 and I-89) and the strong “influence” of regional metropolitan areas (Boston, New York, and Montreal) that offer complimentary opportunities for tourism and economic development. Windsor is also accessible by rail for both passenger and freight transportation.**
2. **Downtown Property** - A substantial amount of “unused facilities assets” in the town and the region are available for development without adversely impacting open land. These include several former industrial properties, including the former Goodyear campus, that are undergoing site assessment in order to determine the nature and extent of contamination, and the costs for cleanup. These properties are already connected to town water and sewer, and are therefore attractive for commercial and light industrial development.
3. **Entrepreneurial energy** - A high level of entrepreneurial energy presents an opportunity for economic development. This energy is the result of the major economic changes that have taken place in the region over the last 20 years. The growth of technology-oriented businesses and start-ups coming out of the Dartmouth College and DHMC academic/medical hubs are creating job and business development opportunities throughout the region.
4. **Infrastructure** - The Town has ample infrastructure capacity in its water treatment and sewer plant, as well as established sewer and water lines within most of the developable area.
5. **School Capacity** - The Town has ample space within its school system to encourage property and business development that would attract a younger workforce with school age children.
6. **Natural Resources** - Natural resources abundantly located within Windsor add an intrinsic value to the Town as a location for economic development. The Connecticut River, Mill Brook, Lake Runnemedede, Mount Ascutney’s trails and ski resort, as well as other nearby trails and resort areas, offer a desirable setting for both businesses and residential development.
7. **Historic and Cultural Resources** - The commitment of the Town and property owners to preserving important historic resources and celebrating local history, combined with strong community support for the arts and innovation adds value to existing businesses and enables economic development officials to market the cultural vibrancy of the community.
8. **Social Services** - Along with Windsor’s cultural and historical attractions, the community’s continued commitment to strengthening the Town’s social services infrastructure via the Mount Ascutney Hospital, the Windsor Area Community Partnership, the Windsor Community Resource Center, the Windsor Recreation Department and other organizations and programs denotes a community invested in all of its citizen’s needs.

Challenges

In addition to the assets that favor Windsor’s economic future, the Town faces several challenges in its efforts to revitalize the former downtown industrial area, now referred to as the Rails to Riverfront area. These challenges are as follows:

1. **Truck Access and Traffic** – Many of today’s industrial and commercial activities require trucks for transportation of goods and materials, whereas past industrial uses relied more heavily on rail as a means of transportation. The changing vision for the Rails to Riverfront area (between the railroad tracks and the Connecticut River) involves a greater mix of uses than was allowed in the industrial district. Truck traffic into this designated development area is an issue that should be addressed to ensure that economic development does not negatively impact residents’ quality of life or detract from the development of Main Street as a pedestrian friendly retail center.

2. **Contamination from former Industrial Activities** – Assessment and remediation of contamination on former industrial properties (brownfields) designated for economic development may hamper the timely development of buildings and/or properties for other uses.
3. **Floodplains** – Much of the Town needs to resolve issues inherent in the re-mapped floodplain areas along the Connecticut River and other sections of the Town with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) so that developers and property owners can accurately determine the costs associated with construction and insurance.

Overall challenges facing the Town in its economic development efforts include the following:

1. **Balancing Growth and Change with Quality of Life** – Windsor has gone from being an employment center and bustling community of over 4,100 residents, to being a bedroom community to the Upper Valley with less than 3,600 residents. These changes, along with the aging of the population, have made the town a quieter community than it was in years past. The Town may face challenges as new developments are proposed in defining the community's historic character.
2. **Balancing Housing with Job Creation** – The need for housing in the Upper Valley has increased the interest on the part of developers to develop housing in surrounding towns, including Windsor. The community needs to carefully consider the best locations for new housing, and to encourage the types of development that will best serve the needs of a growing community and a vibrant downtown. Housing should serve a broad spectrum of income groups.

There is reason for great sense of opportunity and optimism for the future of Windsor. That optimism can be based on an appreciation for the past balanced with a realization that a sustainable community needs to accept and constructively deal with change.

III. Strategies for the Future

The EPR study developed a profile of a “successful regional employer” so that the Town of Windsor can strategically recruit firms that are highly likely to succeed in the current economic development climate. The report concluded the following:

- A. **Companies in the region are successful when they produce high-end or specialty goods or services.** Windsor County is not a low-cost region relative to the New England region or the country as a whole. Thus, companies in the region do not compete well over the long term in cost-driven, commodity markets or under commodity-like competitive conditions where the Town or regional business must be the lowest cost producer in the world.

Regional companies can compete in arenas where the product or service is a commodity-oriented product or service offering – provided:

- (1) the product or service services a highly specialized niche market and/or is delivered with a technology- or knowledge-intensive attribute that is central to the product or service, or
- (2) the product or service is produced or delivered through a technology-intensive or knowledge-intensive manufacturing process or delivery mechanism.

- B. **Companies in the region are successful when they are positioned with a work force that is productive – they have workers that work both “hard and smart.”** This is evidenced by data that show that companies in sectors that many pay “higher than average wages” also have experienced an increase in job opportunities.

Key Industry categories for the Windsor County region were defined as those categories those that:

- Pay the median regional wage or better than the statewide average for the particular industry
- Experienced job increases of at least 100 over the past two business cycles (Sectors under stress lost more than 100 jobs over the past two business cycles)

C. Companies in the region that were successful also exhibited desirable capital investment characteristics in that they make continual investments in renewing their production capacity and in accessing the latest technologies over time. This was obtained from nearly two dozen interviews of key businesses in the Windsor County region (including Harpoon Brewery in the Town). This was important because “steady” capital investment facilitates the process of innovation and renewal to meet the needs of changing customer markets. Maintaining competitiveness is a direct result of making significant and continuous hard investments in capital equipment and technology that facilitate continuous productivity improvement and the discovery of new markets and ways to serve those opportunities.

D. Companies in the Windsor County region were successful if they accessed regional natural resource endowments to gain competitive advantage. This includes the travel and tourism sector and Luzenac (which still operates a plant in Ludlow, although it no longer operates a processing facility in West Windsor). However, outside of those opportunities, this study found that the region overall was not particularly well endowed with commercially viable natural resource processing opportunities (at least in a relative sense versus other parts of the country where such opportunities are more dominant).

Development and Retention of Key Economic Sectors

By superimposing the above observations of successful regional companies with the employment sectors these companies represent, EPR concluded with a list of key economic sectors that the town and region should concentrate on in their recruitment and retention efforts. These sectors include the following:

Key Sector	Representative Regional Firms (2003)	Representative Firms in Town of Windsor
Specialty Food Products - Defined as: Product development, marketing and/or distribution functions associated with food products targeted to niche consumer markets.	King Arthur Flour Putney Pasta Vermont Country Foods Green Mountain Gringo	Harpoon Brewery
“High Value” Information-Publishing Defined as: Firms specializing in the development, publishing, marketing and distribution of products consisting of intellectual property and or data.	Newsbank InnerTraditions International The National Survey Wild Apple Graphics	None listed
Natural Resource Based Manufactured Products - Defined as: Traditional and high value products manufactured from intermediate natural resources materials	Pompanoosuc Mills Bethel Mills Jeld-Wen Vermont Log Builders Stave Puzzles	Charron Wood Products D&H Wood Products Mario Messina,

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Engineered Products and Design Support - Defined as: Fabricated specialty plastic, glass, and metal goods including the engineering and design required to satisfy customer specific needs and specifications.	GW Plastics Hancor Mack Molding Ultramotive Clifford of Vermont	Lance International Simon Pearce Seldon Technologies
Traditional Machine Tools - Defined as: Firms engaged in the design, manufacture, repair and rebuilding of metal forming machines and machine tooling.	Vermont Machine Tool Lovejoy Tool Parks & Woolson Machine Co. MacDermid Equipment	Rod Gray Machine Tool Service
High Value-added Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - Defined as: Firms specializing in selling professional, scientific and technical knowledge and skills primarily to other industry clients and customers.	Dubois and King Dufresne and Henry SCITEST, Inc. Concepts NREC Precision Valley Communications	Turner of the Century Dufresne & Associates GeoDesign Inc.
Destination Family Resort and Recreation & Related Tourist Activities Defined as: Firms providing the core services of lodging, meals and recreation activity to traveling and vacationing consumers.	Okemo Mountain Resort Mt. Ascutney Quechee Suicide Six Ski Area	Madeinvermont.com American Precision Museum Old Constitution House Juniper Hill Inn

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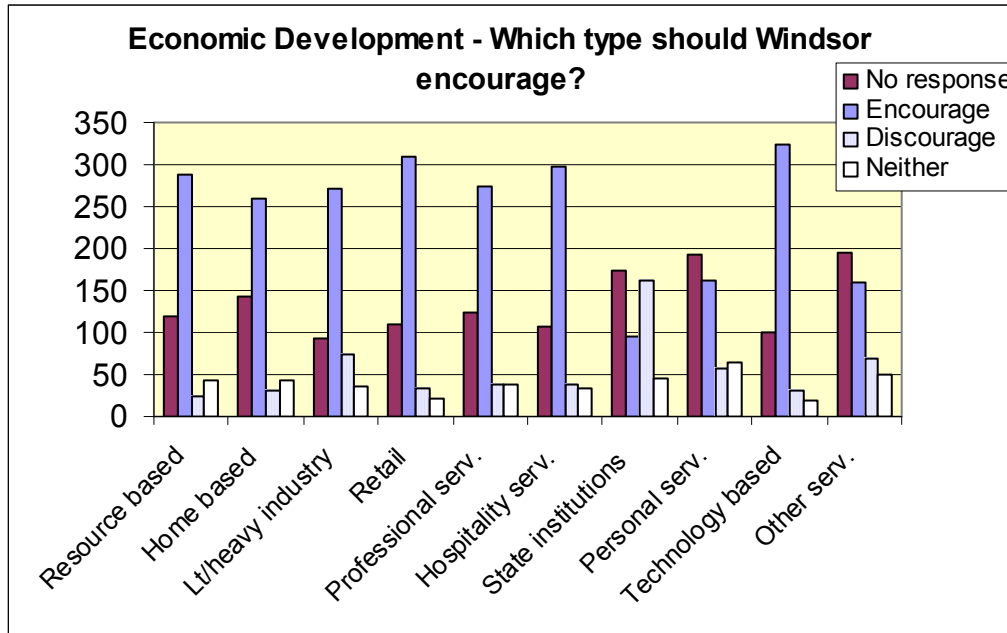
As the chart above notes, companies that are located in Windsor represent most of the key economic sectors in the region. In particular, the following have seen a great deal of growth in the last few years:

- **Wood products**, from craftsman level to the small manufacturer is a consistent growth sector in Vermont, Windsor County and the Town of Windsor. Specialty and niche market Vermont made wood products have global appeal and a sustainable market. Wood specialty products are a viable economic activity.
- Start up and established **“high tech” research and development companies** are viewing our area as an attractive location for its quality of life and proximity to higher education
- **“Cultural Heritage Tourism”** offers a significant opportunity to attract visitors to the community. Windsor’s has numerous opportunities to capture this economic sector by capitalizing on its historical significance, early industrial activities, and proximity to art colonies, artists and museums. The recent relocation of the Cornish Colony Museum to Main Street in Windsor has enhanced this sector in the downtown.
- The **Creative Economy** is a term that refers to the changing nature of the economy from one that is machine-driven to one that relies on the creativity of individuals. The term also refers to the value of cultural amenities in the decisions that individuals and companies make about where they want to live and work.
- Ranging from artisan-based shops to internet-based services and products, this sector is growing in Vermont, and has strong representation in Windsor. This “creative sector” includes the activities of cultural organizations, individual artists, self-employed creative professionals, inventors, performers, and craftspeople. It also includes services such as: software development, news, entertainment, and advertising and is an economy based on ideas that add value across the economic spectrum.

Residents who responded to the Windsor Town Survey that was distributed in 2004 expressed support for a broad range of economic development types in the town. The type of

economic development that received the least amount of support in the survey was the expansion of state institutions (see Figure 3, below).

Figure 3 – Windsor Town Survey Results



Locations for Future Growth and Development

The Town of Windsor has done a significant amount of planning work over the last ten years in order to encourage the revitalization of historical structures and vitality on Main Street, and the cleanup and redevelopment of the Rails to Riverfront area. Development in these areas is discussed in greater detail in the Land Use chapter of this plan, but are highlighted here as successful revitalization of these areas will have a broader impact on the health and livability of the broader community. The following sections discuss the types of economic growth that the Town would like to see in several areas of town.

Main Street – Main Street provides economic development within the Town by the adaptive reuse of historic buildings and upgrading of existing facilities. The Downtown Development Committee supports this activity by working with current and prospective business and property owners.

Rails to Riverfront area – The Rails to Riverfront area offers longer-range economic development opportunities to the community. This area offers the best opportunities for bringing back a mix of retail, light industry, offices, planned high density housing, and recreation areas to the downtown core. Once contamination and site control issues are resolved, this revitalization area can provide the “walk to work” environment that new and expanding businesses seek. This also has appeal for technology firms and technology support/service firms who are looking for locations with a high service component and affordable housing nearby for the workforce.

The Rails to Riverfront Master Planning process, funded by the Vermont Community Development Program, resulted in conceptual illustrations for redevelopment of the Rails to Riverfront area. These illustrations and guidelines are included in the Windsor Design Guidelines document adopted by the Selectboard and Planning Commission in 2005.

Central Street – A growing opportunity that coincides with the development of the Rails to River area is the adjacent Central Street area. Central Street offers opportunities as Main Street reaches capacity with the development of the dilapidated buildings behind Dan’s Diner (off Main Street). One immediate location on Central Street that provides potential development opportunities is the site of the current Town Highway/Public Works site. As plans are developed to consolidate and re-locate these services, the Town will have the option of looking at development possibilities that support economic development.

Windsor Industrial Park – The Windsor Industrial Park (“See it Made”) still has developable space. This site could be an attractive location for creative businesses that fit in the “see it made” concept, where visitors may see the creative process in action, as well as purchase products made on site. This area has also recently added a garden area and canoe rental business to take advantage of its location on the Connecticut River.

Opportunities for the development of other parcels more suitable for traditional “heavy industry” should be pursued in areas with access to town infrastructure. Additionally, we may find that there are areas suitable to promote a “green” center dealing with residential refuse. Return of State lands to the Town of Windsor would also provide new economic development opportunities. In all of the above cases, careful thought, discussion and decision-making must be brought into play as we investigate new options, industries and uses.

Goals

- 1) Create a diversified, sustainable economic base within Windsor that will provide measurable job creation and retention.
- 2) Seek economic activities that will provide competitive wages, benefits and job opportunities.
- 3) Develop a technology environment (Wi-Fi, high speed internet access and bandwidth) within the core downtown area that will support all potential business applications.
- 4) Create an incubating environment for “creative economy” enterprises to start-up and flourish in Windsor.
- 5) Achieve sustainable occupancy within designated economic development areas with businesses and activities that are compatible with the goals and objectives of this chapter.
- 6) Establish Windsor as a prime destination for “heritage tourism” and outdoor recreation, and as a regional center for cultural institutions and events.
- 7) Provide reliable, affordable, and relevant social services attractive to employers and workers, such as day care, elder care, recreation, health care, arts and culture, etc.
- 8) Build on the community’s past history of innovation and cultural development to attract the casual visitor with goal of encouraging them to think of Windsor as a place to spend time, and perhaps live or start a business.
- 9) Match economic development activities with proportional growth in town provided infrastructure, services and support required to sustain a robust and diverse community.

IV. Recommendations

- 1) **Support the Windsor Improvement Corporation as Windsor’s Economic Development “arm.”**
- 2) **Continue to work towards integration of local economic development efforts through WIC with regional efforts through the Springfield Regional Development Corporation and statewide efforts through the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Department of Economic Development.**
- 3) Participate in the creation and maintenance of a web-based database of commercial and industrial properties in Windsor.
- 4) Ensure continued cooperation between the planning commission and local economic development groups.
- 5) Ensure the availability of adequate municipal services in Windsor’s designated downtown and other locations where development is specifically encouraged in this Plan.
- 6) Encourage the rehabilitation and use of existing, downtown retail and industrial space through zoning, local tax incentives, and other appropriate means.
- 7) Support the continued use and expansion of rail facilities for passenger and freight service.
- 8) Work with state and regional agencies to promote heritage tourism in Windsor and the surrounding area; support the creation of a national Scenic Byway along the Connecticut River.
- 9) Ensure the presence of a stable and capable workforce by supporting local education and encouraging local businesses to participate in the local vocational curriculum.
- 10) Collaborate with Mt. Ascutney Hospital to maintain a strong health care presence in the region.
- 11) Support the continued development of the hospitality industry.
- 12) Support, where appropriate, the activities of the Windsor-Mt. Ascutney Region Chamber of Commerce.
- 13) Encourage the Chamber of Commerce, Windsor Improvement Corporation, and large businesses to work with area daycare providers to support expanding the daycare capacity in town.

10. Communications Towers and Structures

The maintenance of a modern and accessible telecommunications network is essential to the public welfare. Public safety agencies, such as emergency medical services, fire and police departments, rely on broadcast and communications facilities to provide essential services. In addition, a modern and accessible telecommunications network provides communities with economic, social and cultural benefits.

At the same time, network infrastructure should be developed in an efficient, safe and thoughtful manner. Possible impacts upon scenic and cultural resources, aesthetics, and public health and safety should all be considered during the planning process. The field of wireless communications and telecommunications is undergoing rapid change. Advancements in this technology have and will continue to affect growth in the Town of Windsor. Technological improvements will enable people to work at home and telecommute to work or to other remote or central offices more readily.

The major planning issue with wireless communications technology today is the siting and construction of new communications towers and supporting network infrastructure including power lines, access corridors and support buildings. These include towers* for wireless communications facilities** and wireless telecommunication facilities***. In the hilly topography characteristic of this Region, towers and related facilities need to be located on the hilltops or higher elevation points in order to provide the broadest service area coverage. These towers and their supporting infrastructure can alter mountaintops and ridge lines in ways that negatively impact scenic resources vital to the Region's economic future and cultural richness. Aesthetic concerns will increase as more mountains and ridgelines are developed. The towers and network infrastructure must be developed in an efficient, safe and thoughtful manner. Possible impacts upon scenic and cultural resources, aesthetics, and public health, and alternative tower designs that mitigate these impacts, should all be considered during the planning process.

Definition of terms:

* **Tower** - Any structure that is designed and constructed primarily for the purpose of supporting one or more antennas, including self-supporting lattice towers, guy towers, or monopole towers. The term includes radio and television transmission towers, microwave towers, common-carrier towers, cellular, personal communication service (PCS) and similar service towers, alternative tower structures, and the like.

** **Wireless Communication Facility** - A tower, pole, antenna, guy wire, or related fixtures or equipment intended for the use in connection with transmission or receipt of radio or television signals or any other electromagnetic spectrum-based transmission/reception and the construction or improvement of a road, trail, building or structure incidental to a communications facility. Wireless Communication Facilities include Wireless Telecommunication Facilities.

***** Wireless Telecommunication Facility** - A facility consisting of the structures, including the towers and antennas mounted on towers and buildings, equipment and site improvements involved in sending and receiving telecommunications or radio signals from a mobile communications source and transmitting those signals to a central switching computer which connects the mobile unit with land-based or other telephone lines.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 restricts the authority granted under Vermont law to municipalities, such as the Town of Windsor, to prohibit wireless telecommunication facilities by zoning. Municipalities may not prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting efforts to provide wireless telecommunication facilities, and must provide reasonable opportunities for location of such facilities. [Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, Section 704, (a),(7), (B),(i),(ii)] Other wireless communication towers such as towers for radio and television are not covered by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, leaving communities with greater authority to regulate these facilities. The Town of Windsor should assess where these facilities may be located within the municipality and enact conditions under the zoning authority to implement that policy decision.

In addition, there is some uncertainty about the health effects of the electromagnetic fields generated by wireless communications facilities upon people living near them. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 provides that no local government may regulate a wireless telecommunication facility on the basis of environmental effects of radio frequency emissions to the extent that such facilities comply with the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) regulations concerning such emissions. [Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, Section 704, (a),(7), (B),(iv)] An applicant for a wireless telecommunication tower must prove to the satisfaction of the Town of Windsor that the proposed facility will be and remain in compliance with the FCC's regulations of radio frequency emissions. The Federal Communications Commission retains jurisdiction over the public airwaves and the communications industry in general. Additionally, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) exercises control over the location and height of wireless communication towers and similar structures to prevent interference with airport operations.

Telecommunications Goals:

1. Provide residents with the benefits of an integrated and modern telecommunications network while minimizing the economic, aesthetic and cultural costs of its development.
2. Support the enhancement of integrated and modern wireless communications networks when such facilities do not have significant adverse environmental, health or aesthetic impacts.
3. Enable new economic opportunities through the use of wireless communications technology.

Telecommunications Policies:

1. New communications towers and supporting infrastructures detract from the beauty of the Town and should be sited and constructed only as necessary to meet the Town's changing needs. New towers, access corridors and utility poles serving towers should not be sited or constructed where adequate communication coverage can be obtained through use of existing structures. The use of existing structures, such as water towers, farm silos, church steeples and buildings, to support the wireless communications broadcast equipment is encouraged whenever it will not have a negative impact on significant historic or aesthetic resources.
2. New wireless communications towers, access corridors, and utility poles serving towers should not be sited or constructed as long as the existing site is viable. Those wishing to provide new or expanded communications services must utilize the existing Town tower and supporting infrastructure, unless it can be demonstrated that the sharing or collocation is prohibitive due to frequency interference, adverse aesthetic impacts or risk to public health. The Town should facilitate the sharing of space to the fullest extent possible. Those building new towers or support infrastructure shall not prohibit the sharing of those facilities by other users for reasons other than frequency interference or avoiding a demonstrated risk to public health, in that the public exposure to Radio Frequency (RF) radiation will exceed the applicable FCC standards for human exposure. If the Town tower cannot be utilized, the use of existing structures, such as water towers and buildings, to support telecommunications broadcast equipment is encouraged wherever appropriate and where it will not have a negative impact on significant historic or aesthetic resources nor a risk to public health.
3. Siting and design of new communications towers and facilities (including any support and maintenance structures, necessary access corridors and utility lines) shall minimize impacts on natural, scenic, wildlife habitats and corridors and aesthetic resources. The use of the ridges for communications towers and related facilities needs to be undertaken in a manner that will neither unduly detract from nor adversely affect Windsor's scenic values.
4. To minimize conflict with scenic values, facility design and construction for new communication towers and accessory facilities should adhere to the following principles:

Where feasible, new towers should be sited in areas not highly visible to the traveling public and not visible from residential areas, historic districts and public use areas or outdoor recreation areas;

New towers should be located in forested areas or be sufficiently landscaped to screen the lower sections of towers and related ground fixtures from public vantage points, such as trails, roads or water bodies;

New towers should use materials, architectural styles, color schemes, lighting fixtures, mass and other elements to promote aesthetic compatibility with surrounding uses and to avoid adverse visual impacts;

Where prominent views of a site exist, new towers should be located downgrade of the ridge so as not to exceed the elevation of the immediate ridge;

Where new access roads are proposed, they should be located to follow the contours of the land and to avoid open fields or meadows in order to minimize their visibility;

New towers should not be sited on peaks and ridges that function as regional focal points;

Existing tree cover should be maintained to the maximum extent possible, with tree removal allowed only to clear the footprint area of the tower structure and accessory facilities; and

A blue or black color balloon shall be raised to indicate the height of the tower for at least one day before a hearing is held provided it is in compliance with all local, state and federal regulations, including FAA restrictions on height limitations.

5. An applicant for installation of new transmission facilities shall demonstrate that public exposure to Radio Frequency (RF) radiation will not exceed the applicable FCC standards for human exposure. Assessment of possible health effects shall be based on the cumulative effects of all RF emissions at any given location, and should include both preconstruction and post-construction monitoring.
6. In the event that use of a tower is discontinued, the site should be restored to its natural condition, or to the condition that existed prior to construction, as appropriate. The developer of a new tower should provide the Town of Windsor with a site restoration and reclamation plan at the time of application for the new tower site in the event the tower and accessory facilities are abandoned in the future. This site restoration and reclamation plan should include provisions for removal of the tower and accessory facilities, regrading, revegetation, a time frame for accomplishing the site restoration, and adequate security, such as a letter of credit or a performance bond, including anticipated inflation, to provide funds necessary for completing the site restoration and reclamation plan.
7. The Secretary of Administration of the Office of the Governor of Vermont, pursuant to under 30 V.S.A. Section 227b, should notify the Planning Commission of the Town of Windsor in order to conform with this Plan before allowing the use of state or private property in the Town for a new or expanded communication facility.
8. The Vermont Public Service Board should notify the Planning Commission of the Town of Windsor in order to conform with this Plan before allowing the use of state or private property in the Town for a new or expanded communication facility.
9. The Agency of Natural Resources in its capacity as managers of State Lands should notify the Planning Commission of the Town of Windsor in order to conform with this Plan before allowing the use of state property in the Town for a new or expanded communications facility on state land in the Town.

Telecommunications Recommendations:

1. The Town of Windsor, its officials and Planning Commission should develop and incorporate wireless communication policies and elements into the Town's zoning Regulations, and adopt the provisions of Title 24, V.S.A., Chapter 117, Section 4407,

Subsection 17, into Windsor Zoning Bylaws. This subsection provides that any proposed tower developer pay the reasonable costs to the Town of a technical study of how the tower would affect the Town. The development of alternative technologies to serve the industry, such as satellite technology that would eliminate the need for towers should be encouraged.

Wind Energy

Wind energy is a clean and renewable resource. There are many benefits to wind as a source of energy such as a clean and local source of energy. However, local planning is very important in the siting of a wind energy facility. Safety, operational noise, lightning, impairment of scenic views, height, destruction of habitat are important considerations when determining the appropriate location for a facility.

In Vermont, commercial wind-generation will be most likely to be along ridgelines or mountain tops with elevations of 2000 – 3500 feet. The challenge for communities will be to determine which ridgelines or mountaintops are best suited for the development of a windmill facility.

It will be helpful to think of potential commercial wind-generation facilities as least suitable, potentially suitable or most suitable. The least suitable sites are those that have the following characteristics: high visible peaks, important plant and wildlife habitat, scenic corridors, remote access to transmission lines. Those sites characterized as most suitable are: site with existing commercial development such as telecommunication towers, earth extraction, significant logging and indistinct viewsheds. Potentially suitable areas include: settlements adjacent to ridgelines, commercial, recreational uses and ridgelines with limited scenic qualities.

Site design of wind operations should minimize aesthetic and physical impacts of the development of access roads, transmission lines, lights, accessory buildings, etc.

Wind Energy Goal

1. To encourage energy conservation and the development of local renewable energy resources.

Wind Energy Policies

1. Facilitate the use and awareness of renewable and alternative energy sources such as wood, solar, wind and hydropower.
2. Encourage potential commercial wind energy facilities be within areas identified as most or potentially suitable by the town.
3. Encourage site selection and site design of any potential commercial wind facilities to meet Town standards and specifications.

4. Encourage the collocation of telecommunication and wind generating facilities.

Wind Energy Recommendations:

1. Develop standards for determining the “suitability” for the location(s) of wind generation facilities.
2. Participate in hearings under Title 30, Section 248 of the Vermont Statute with regards to wind generation applications.

APPENDIX A

Recreational Opportunities in Windsor

Archery
Basketball
Biking
Camping
Canoeing and boating
Children's recreational program
Concerts on the Common
Craft classes
Fishing
Football
Golf
Hiking
Horseback riding
Horseshoes
Hunting
Ice fishing
Leaf peeping
Little League program
Nature Trails
Performing Arts
Skating
Skiing (Alpine and Nordic)
Sleigh rides
Snowmobiling
Snowshoeing
Soccer
Softball (men's and women's)
Swimming (recreational and lessons)
Tennis
Volleyball
Walking tours

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

type	Museum
name	American Precision Museum
location	Main Street, Windsor
ownership	Private
description	Exhibits display the industrial revolution from its beginning in Windsor in the early 19 th century to the present. The building has been designated a National Historic Site and is open during the summer season.

type	Town Forest
name	Paradise Park
location	West of Lake Runnemedede
ownership	Public
description	A 115 acre forest and recreation area with trails, picnic grounds, and some camping facilities. It is a uniquely beautiful natural area.

APPENDIX C

STATE STREET SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The State Street School family consists of administration, staff, parents, students, and community members.

Combining knowledge and desire to educate with high expectations for our students, opportunities for academic, personal, and social growth will be provided for all.

We will develop independent learners by teaching skills, fostering positive self-concepts, and promoting self-esteem. Each student will be provided with the opportunity to experience success and to achieve his or her personal best in a changing society.

APPENDIX D

WINDSOR HIGH SCHOOL – STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

It is our commitment to provide the necessary knowledge, skills and guidance to each student and to assist him in becoming a contributing member of a democratic society. Using all of the appropriate resources at our disposal, we shall offer experiential training, the opportunity for critical thought, and the means to understand, judge and work toward the establishment of useful cultural values.

Knowledge flows from the academic, vocational technical, social and work experiences garnered during the student's years in school. In recognition of the uniqueness of this experience for each individual, we shall make every effort to provide both group and individual instruction as needed whenever possible.

It shall be our goal to prepare Windsor High School students academically for higher education, as well as to prepare them for practical service in the community as responsible citizens and efficient workers.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Provide opportunities for all youth to be educated to the fullest extent of their capabilities.
 - a. Provide a variety of course offerings and encourage students to make responsible selections.
 - b. Provide experiences in both group and individualized instruction.
 - c. Provide a curriculum designed to challenge all levels of intellectual ability.
 - d. Provide all students with the opportunities to participate in intramural and extracurricular activities.
2. Graduate only those students who are deemed competent in listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning and mathematics.
 - a. Focus upon reading, writing, concentrating, listening, reasoning and speaking skills in both required and elective courses.

- b. Insure the maintenance of the above skills through continued observation and evaluation.
 - c. Evaluate all students to ensure mastery of Basic Competencies established by the State Board of Education.
 - d. Provide students who are deemed deficient in any competency with activities to meet their needs.
3. Encourage each student to develop decision-making abilities by providing experiences where responsibilities and accountability are integral factors of performance.
- a. Instill in students the realization that their education is a personal responsibility.
 - b. Provide opportunities for student participation in school and class government.
 - c. Encourage the skills and commitment required for involvement in citizenship.
 - d. Encourage students to share in making decisions regarding their choices of courses of study.
 - e. Provide courses in which outside related work/homework is a course requirement.
 - f. Encourage each student to select courses appropriate to career expectations.
 - g. Help students develop and utilize attitudes and habits essential to critical thinking.
4. Develop within students the ability to reason, to communicate clearly and precisely and to discriminate among alternative courses of action.
- a. Encourage proper language usage in all subject areas.
 - b. Present experiences requiring the discrimination between essential and non-essential data and the proper use of gained information.
 - c. Assist the student in differentiating between fact and fiction.
 - d. Assist the student in the development of skills necessary for clear and precise oral and written expression.
 - e. Present the student with a variety of ideas and encourage him to evaluate them rationally.

- f. Assist the student in developing a systemic, logical approach to any task as a preparation for success.
5. Assist students in gaining knowledge and understanding of the relationships and interdependence among people and their environment.
- a. Encourage students to compare their experiences and traditions with those of other cultures.
 - b. Encourage an understanding of the traditions, institutions and economic organization of the United States and of Western Civilization.
 - c. Promote the perspective that human societies are becoming increasingly interdependent on a global scale.
 - d. Provide experiences which will enable students to follow the progression of human development from past to present.
 - e. Encourage the understanding of the nature of people and their relationship to their environment.
 - f. Encourage the prudent use of and conservation of natural and personal resources.
 - g. Help the student understand our technological environment.
6. Development in each student an appreciation of moral, cultural, aesthetic and recreational aspects of life.
- a. Provide opportunities for analysis and interpretation of moral, cultural, aesthetic and recreational aspects of life.
 - b. Provide opportunities for discussion of the themes which reflect the attempt of people to deal with themselves and their environment.
 - c. Assist the student in attaining an understanding of and an appreciation for the creative process.
 - d. Encourage the ability to evaluate and to respond to conflicts characteristic of present day society.
 - e. Encourage reading as a pleasurable activity.
 - f. Provide students with the opportunity to observe and experience the arts and talents of others.
7. Help each student develop realistic personal goals, provide encouragement toward their attainment, and foster appreciation of this personal worth.

- a. Promote a positive self-image, group identity and mature attitude.
 - b. Discuss with students possible career options.
 - c. Provide each student with experiences in which he can succeed.
 - d. Provide opportunities, encouragement and assistance to do individual or specialized work which includes consideration of each student's needs, interests, desires and goals.
8. Encourage each student to become a responsible participant in his career and economic community.
- a. Provide training and experience to help the student develop skills and abilities to become a responsible participant in our economy, both as a worker and as a consumer.
 - b. Provide students with the opportunities to acquire skills necessary for success in post-secondary education.
 - c. Encourage the students to extend their special interests to work and leisure time experiences, in situations suitable to their needs and desires.
9. Maintain and improve the quality of education within our school. We will review and revise methods and programs to insure their effectiveness, feeling free to experiment and adopt new and promising ideas and procedures.
- a. Involve students in curriculum decisions.
 - b. Encourage staff participation at conferences and in-service programs.
 - c. Subscribe to appropriate professional publications.
 - d. Incorporate with the school program consideration of contemporary and foreseeable problems, issues and needs confronting society.
 - e. Consider, with the content of specific courses and the sequences of course offerings, the recommendations or requirements of established advisory groups or agencies and interested concerned individuals.